



REFORMED CHURCH MESSENGER

CHRISTMAS
1919

The Strangers at the Door

A
Christmas Story



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By
George Bayard Young

PART I

THE decree had gone forth! Rome had spoken. Her mandate must be obeyed.

And so, in fear and trembling, each Jewish family sought the place of its nativity, that there a proper registration might be made of all possessions, from the youngest lamb in the field to the finest mansion in the city. Upon the basis of this property the new tax was to be levied.

The whole land was thrown into confusion. From the regions of ancient Tyre and Sidon, from among the foothills of the cedar-crowned Lebanon Mountains, forth from the densely populated cities and villages in the Valley of Jezreel and encircling the little Sea of Galilee, and far southward to the shores of the Great Sea, moved a steady stream of humanity, impelled by a common impulse.

For a moment these diverging streams met and mingled upon the great Roman highways, and then moved on to their appointed goal.

Among those who came under the power of the emperor's unalterable decree were two peasants, whose home was hidden among the hills of Galilee in the obscure village of Nazareth. They, too, must obey, and so, in company with multitudes of others, they had turned their faces southward. It was a wearisome journey, not only on account of the many miles to be traveled, but especially because of the general irritation and vexation occasioned by the new law. Galling as was the Roman yoke at any time, it seemed thrice burdensome in this hour, when every family must forego present and future plans for the time being and seek the place of its nativity.

But, despite it all, in the eyes of these two peasants, who moved ever southward, there shone a light which no darkness could quench. Singularly calm and confident were they. Simple as were their garments, hardened by toil as were their hands, and bronzed as were their faces, still there was about them such a fineness of manner, gentleness of spirit, and nobility of soul, as to make all who knew them show them marked deference. They commanded respect without seeking it. In their veins flowed the blood of a long line of Hebrew kings.

They were lineal descendants of King David, who first sprang into prominence in the nation's history when he slew the giant Goliath. Then it was that the women of Israel sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." But this first great public victory was only the forerunner of the many to follow, and David's spirit and undaunted heroism were stamped indelibly, not alone upon Joseph,

but even more pronouncedly upon Mary, his espoused wife. Firm as were the lines about his mouth, even more firm were those about hers. Difficulties would not dismay him, while to her they were but a challenge.

For some time they had been traveling toward Jerusalem in silence, each wrapped in profound thought, when suddenly Mary said, "What thinkest thou, Joseph? That we shall not find room in the inn? Did I not see a cloud flit across thy sky?" Joseph did not wish to add, even in the slightest degree, to the burden which rested alike upon all, and therefore he sought to evade the question.

"'Tis true the crowd is very great, the largest I have ever seen," he said. And then suddenly breaking off the conversa-

tion and looking far off across the fields and far beyond the distant Judean hills, he exclaimed, "'Twas along that road thou passed when thou visited thy cousin Elizabeth, was it not?"

That visit! It could never be forgotten. As Joseph spoke, a flood of tender, thrilling memories came to her that made her soul leap for joy. So engrossed was she in recalling the succession of events pertaining to her memorable visit to her cousin Elizabeth and the priest Zacharias that it seemed as though she had forgotten her original question to Joseph. But had she? With fine chivalry Joseph sought to beguile her by calling her attention to all that was beautiful in the sky and tree and shrub and plant and bird. Late as it was in the year, there were still many plants in bloom that added their beauty and fragrance to the scene, and many a highly colored bird sang his sweetest song as he flew directly over their heads, as though he had come with a special message of good cheer for them in their long journey. Both were nature lovers and were ever on the alert for something new in her wondrous domain.

But their conversation came to a quick ending. The sharp ring of a horse's hoofs was heard approaching. A Roman centurion came riding by, lordly, imperious, scornful. Scarcely pausing in his mad flight he shouted to the multitude that still thronged the great highway, "Hasten! Only one day yet remains for the registration. If your names are not recorded you forfeit all." A pang shot through the hearts of many, and especially of Joseph and Mary. Night was already falling, and Jerusalem was still twenty-five miles distant, and little Bethlehem, their goal, six miles still farther.

(Continued in Home and Young Folks' Department)



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Ever-the-Same Christmas

THE home is made precious by a thousand little affairs that are so commonplace that no one thinks of them until the years are gone, the home broken up, part of the circle in the spirit world, and the rest scattered into distant parts of the earth. Long afterwards when the boys have become men of affairs and the girls are mothers, the little old clock, the kitchen stove with its hearth where, at night, the children's feet were toasted before they pattered up the stairs into the cold bedroom, and other homely customs, stand out vividly in the mature mind. The sum of all that happened in those early years determines what we are far more than most of us suspect. Tender memories bear witness to their power over us long after the substance of the things themselves has perished. *The apron strings of a good mother stretch over the years and over the seas to steady her children in evil times.*

Some of us who know the value of home surroundings, deliberately plan features that will tie tendrils about our children that hold them through time and into eternity. Here is a sweet-toned gong sounded when the meals are ready, three times a day for twenty years; and it matters not where, in after years, when tones of the same quality and pitch are heard, they will take the hearer back to the scenes of his childhood and make audible the voices that are stilled. There is the Sunday dinner, when foods and dainties were served that appeared at no other time. These same foods after fifty years will make vivid the old dinner-board and the bright faces surrounding it.

Christmas is a season of unsurpassed opportunity for tying up one's children to all that is gentle and good by instituting customs that grip the life in its most impressionable years. The mere babe drinks in the lights of the little Christmas tree and breathes in the odors of pine and fir. He joins in the shouts of surprise and joy long before he understands their significance. The customs that are repeated from year to year, the decorations that are never new, the hour that is always the same, these and all associated with them are influential because they never vary and constant repetition makes anything indelible. Perhaps it is Christmas eve that the tree is lighted, the gifts distributed and the carols sung. No song composed in the past forty years is as sweet to the writer as the simple carols of his boyhood. Perhaps it is Christmas morning when father hurries downstairs, lights the grate fire and sets every taper on the tree to burning. When everyone is ready the family comes into the presence of this creation of wonder and beauty, with its varied and mysterious fruits and with gifts spread under its branches. Custom, rigid custom, here, is a delight and a blessing. For young parents, as important as the house furnishings and the foods, is the selection of the forms of Christmas celebration for the little children that shall come into the home. The best of the traditions of their own homes should be brought over and combined in the new one which they twain have set up for a new generation. *Christmas in the home is a fine opportunity for predestinating the lives of the children of the household.*

DAVID H. FOUSE

Denver, Colorado

EDITORIAL

A CHRISTMAS WISH

"God bless us, every one!" Tiny Tim's Christmas prayer seems to sum up everything at this glad season. Its music drowns for millions the babel of jangling voices and brings solace for a little while at least to myriads of perplexed and baffled souls. On this birthday of the little Child Who lay in Bethlehem's Manger the world somehow is moved to tenderness and unselfish goodness. Explain it as you will, ever against that holy time wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated, the spiritual thermometer of mankind rises high and hearts are mysteriously brought back from the frozen land to the land of warmth and brotherhood. Blessing—that is what sinning and suffering men seek at this glad time; and that is what many thousands, thank God, are seeking to pass on to other lives, especially to the children of deprivation and sorrow. "God bless us, every one!" Dr. John Grant Newman has finely expressed this Christmas prayer in the terms of the "abiding" graces of the Christian life:

"May Christmas bring to you its tripart joy—
True *faith*, to free you e'er from doubt's alloy;
Strong *hope*, to sing your heart to sweet repose;
And *love*, to help you soothe another's woes."

We cannot emphasize too often that it is by no means easy to "keep Christmas" like Christians; for to "keep Christmas" is a matter of the heart; it requires faith, hope and love, these three—and without either of these we cannot have a truly Christian Christmas.

I. For all who read these lines we wish first of all the blessing of a *new birth of faith* this Christmastide. Read over and over with childlike heart the most beautiful story in all literature, the story of the Wondrous Child, the Virgin Mother, the lowly stable with its manger cradle, the angels' song, the worshipping shepherds, the Wise Men from afar, and all those intimate details that make it the best-known and best-loved story ever told. Our needy and troubled lives must follow the Star in all this turmoil and travail, and we will come again to the feet of the Babe of Bethlehem Who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; and there we can lay down our doubts and despairs. Men want to believe in a God Who is like Jesus; the world is in greatest need of Christians whose daily life incarnates the living Word of the living God, men and women who "give a flesh and blood setting to the Gospel."

II. May Christmas be also the *birthday and renewer of godly hope* in all our lives. It is no time to rehearse our troubles, even though sore trials be upon us. Let the glad-some spirit of the season find its home in your soul and wreath your face in the cheer that is contagious and that doeth good like a medicine. Let Charles Dickens speak the sentiment which is especially needed by all inclined to mourn and weep over sad memories and desperate fears:

"Christmas time! That man must be a misanthrope indeed in whose breast something like a jovial feeling is not roused, in whose mind some pleasant associations are not awakened by the recurrence of Christmas. There are people who will tell you that Christmas is not to them what it used to be; that each succeeding Christmas has found some cherished hope or happy prospect of the year before dimmed or passed away; that the present only serves to remind them of reduced circumstances and straitened incomes—of the feasts they once bestowed on hollow friends and of the cold looks that meet them now in adversity and misfortune. Never heed such dismal reminiscences. There are few men who have lived long enough in the world who cannot call up such thoughts any day in the year. Then do not select the merriest of the 365 for your doleful recollections."

III. Best of all, may your Christmas open the flood-gates of a more Christlike love—the *love that goes out into the ministries of kindness*. By all the cries of needy and suffering little ones, of friendly and homeless wanderers in

God's world, of mothers compelled to sit and watch their babies starve—by every grief that challenges sympathy and every hunger that pleads before the friendly door of your Christmas heart—*find the real blessing of the season in being a blessing to others*. So shall the Christmas glory be made to shine in your own soul. Every orphan's stocking should remind us of the swaddling clothes on the Christ Child; every song about God's best gift to men should be a potent plea, voicing the yearnings of His little ones for some good cheer at Christmas time. In remembering them we bring white gifts to the White Comrade; the genuine "white Christmas" is that which reveals most kindly deeds done out of love for Him whose love to us is so wonderful.

To one and all the MESSENGER comes with this sincere Christmas wish, and may its messages add to the sum of such faith and hope and love!

131 P. C. UP

According to figures made public last week by Bradstreet's, the cost of living advanced 1.3% during the last month and now is 131% above the pre-war level. Will any one of our readers figure out just what this means to the average Reformed Church preacher?

The will of the late Henry C. Frick will help to solve this problem for a few of our institutions of learning, so that the salary of the teachers can be raised in some instances at least to a proper level. But the raise of a hundred or two hundred dollars in the salary of the preacher who was under-paid even in pre-war times, is hardly going to meet the desperate situation which confronts many a faithful man today, to say nothing of the suffering which is visited upon his family in many instances.

We fear that the Christmas stockings in many a manse will be rather empty this year, but this glad season would be a good time for consecrated members of the Christian Church to help fill those empty stockings. Temporary donations would not be unacceptable, but far better would be an increase in salary that would put the home of the pastor on a self-respecting basis.

CRIMINAL WASTE

With all the efforts that the Government is making to educate our people, not only with regard to the value, but the imperative necessity of saving, it seems that *extravagance of the most thoughtless and unjustified sort is becoming more common every day in America*. We will certainly be obliged to answer before God and also at the bar of human judgment for our indulgence in all these forms of foolish extravagance. We can do no better than to quote verbatim two recent judgments on this matter that are very full of good common sense.

Miss Elsie Janis, whose efforts to entertain the men overseas throughout the war have been widely recognized by members of the A. E. F., did not cease her patriotic efforts with the close of the war. Long before she became a theatrical luminary, Miss Janis used to go to school in Columbus, Ohio. When she heard the children of Columbus were conducting a thrift drive this month, Miss Janis wrote to the youngsters where she went to school encouraging them in their efforts to save.

Miss Janis has a unique system for saving. She says the best way to save is to *forget about spending*. "I've come to the conclusion," she wrote, "that the best way to save money is to learn to forget. If you want something badly that you know you can't afford, think it over, take the money and put it away and then forget it. You will find that you can live without the object you desired—and you can make ends meet without the money you would have paid for it. I went into a shop the other day firmly

intending to buy several gowns. When a simple blue serge dress was \$200, an evening gown \$250, and a coat \$600, I walked right out and turned on all the Christian Science I possess. I took \$50 and with it bought mother and myself each a hat and some gloves. I took the \$1000 that I would have paid if I had not come to in time, and bought a \$1,000 Treasury Savings certificate. We came home and pulled out all our last year's dresses and decided that the styles of last year were better than this year—we forgot about the certificate, but *it won't forget about us* because it is going to pay us 4.27 per cent. for not being weak-minded and vain about clothes.

"If you are a kiddie and your father gives you, let us say, fifty cents a week, you are a lucky kiddie—but if by chance he did do so, try going without some little thing that costs a dime every week and *you will be surprised how little you will miss the little thing that you go without and how proud you will be when the dimes get to be dollars.*

"The man, woman or child who has the capacity for making money and no talent for saving it is like a man with a glorious singing voice who is stone deaf. He can make a lot of noise for a short time and then ———? The life of a real money maker is about fifteen years. Once you learn to make it, it comes easy; but unless you learn to save it, it goes easier. People rarely sympathize with a person who has had money and lost it. Of him the world says: 'Poor boob, he had his chance, Why didn't he hang on to it?'

"I am beginning to sound like Mrs. Shylock, but really I am sincere. Save and forget—and they never will give a benefit for you in your old age."

From the Christian standpoint this should mean: *Save in order to give.*

The following is from the pen of Dr. Frank Crane:

The curse of this country is extravagance. *We are the most wasteful folk on earth.* We won the war on a program of reckless, unlimited, mountainous waste. So that the Government might waste gigantically and wholesale, individuals skimmed and saved a while during the war pressure. But as soon as the armistice was signed we went at our favorite sport again, throwing money hilariously out of the window, dumping it into the garbage can and making bonfires of twenty dollar bills in the back yard, so to speak.

Workmen, getting fatter pay than they ever had in their lives did not save it, but started out to buy talking machines, new rugs, better clothes for ma and the girls and a flivver for all. And the rich outpaced them. There is more idiotic spending going on right now than ever before. Luxuries are in greater demand now than ever before in the history of the United States. Diamonds, limousines, expensive furs, and silk shirts are selling faster than dealers can get them.

"People who bought fur coats worth \$200 before the war spend as much as \$900 for them now," said a fur dealer. "That does not merely signify that prices have gone up; it means that people are willing to pay for a higher class article. And we are selling five times as many fur coats as before. What is more, people will pay spot cash. It used to be necessary to sell furs on credit; now the buyer seems to have the money. Most of the time he is a man who never would have thought of buying such a thing in the old days."

The demand for jewelry is far in advance of the supply, according to F. C. Backus, Secretary of the National Jewelers' Board of Trade. Why not? If they have the money may they not do as they please with it? A thousand times—no. You have a legal right to light your cigar with a thousand dollar bill. But if you do so, you are a criminal waster in the eyes of any right-minded person.

Think of the sheer wickedness of it, when there are eleven million children in the United States without a schooling; when vast populations in Europe and Asia are starving and freezing; when thousands of human lives around you might be strengthened and brightened by the

money that goes into your furs, diamonds and limousines!"

Didn't you ever read Thomas Hood's poem, where the dying wastrel rich man says,

The wounds I might have healed,
The human sorrow and smart!
And yet it was never in my mind
To play so ill a part!
But evil is wrought by want of thought,
As well as by want of heart!

If these great truths have found lodgment, every reader of the MESSENGER will find ways and means of laying upon the altar a sacrificial gift for the orphan and the desolate, in this and in other lands.

AS THE YEAR ENDS—AND OPENS

In such an hour as this, the Church of the living God should spend much time on its knees before God. Elder C. C. Roudabush, of Grace Church, Altoona, who is wintering in Oakland, Cal., writes to the MESSENGER, urging that our congregations should unite in Watch-Night services at the closing of this year and the beginning of the new. "Surely this is a fitting time," he says, "for united intercession for a revival of divine grace in the hearts of our people and for the salvation of our youth." Other denominations are feeling the need with a special keenness at this time, and we cordially second the suggestion that such a use of the solemn hours when a year is dying would issue in blessing. In view of the great task before us as a denomination and the special opportunities of the Forward Movement, it does seem as though we should be happy to unite at this time in such Watch-Night gatherings in every section of our Church, and in a more general use than ever of the Week of Prayer at the opening of a New Year of grace. Great are the dangers, greater the opportunities and resources of God's people. Measureless will be the victory if we get into tune with our Father's plan. Let us pray!

AN APPEALING BOOK

One of the books recently issued which ought to exert a most wholesome and cheering influence in the homes of America is "Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." The more one learns about the inner life of this remarkable man, the more profound is our admiration for his many-sided greatness. Certainly one of the busiest men of his generation, he yet had time for the things that were most worthwhile. In a day when so many weaklings are complaining that they have no time for the most important concerns of life, Theodore Roosevelt *had time for the Church of Christ* and rarely missed the worship of the sanctuary. Indeed, we recall again how on those occasions in Washington when he did miss, he sent a note of explanation to his pastor. We suppose that Mr. Burleson's crippled post-office system would be utterly broken down if half of our delinquent Church members pursued the same policy today.

Mr. Roosevelt also *had time for the Word of God*, and few men of his day were so thoroughly acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, or could quote so extensively from those sacred pages.

Moreover, *he had time for his friends*, and almost every day is bringing to us new details of his thoughtfulness, especially for those who were in difficulty or travail of any sort.

But what we wish especially to emphasize at this point is that the great statesman, engrossed with so many tremendous problems, seems even in his busiest years to *have had time for his family*. It is, as someone has said, really startling to read what the most active President of the United States was able to do for and with his children while he lived in the White House, when so many other

parents think themselves too busy (especially with their own pleasure or a business that has taken possession of their hearts) to give any special attention to their children, delegating them uninterruptedly to nurses, governesses and schoolmasters, or allowing them to learn the dangerous lessons of the streets. We should feel truly grateful for the publication of such a revealing picture of American family life at its best, as is to be found in these letters of Theodore Roosevelt to his children.

When Mrs. Roosevelt was away from home for a day or two, the President took her place in the religious training and acted, he said, as "vice-mother." "I have been reading each evening from the Bible," he wrote on one of these occasions, when Mrs. Roosevelt was away for nine days. "It has been the story of Saul, David, and Jonathan. They have been so interested that several times I have had to read them more than one chapter. Then each says his prayers and repeats the hymn he is learning, Quentin usually jiggling solemnly up and down while he repeats it. Each finally got one hymn perfect, whereupon in accordance with previous instructions from Mother, I presented each of them with a five-cent piece."

Quite pathetic in the light of the great tragedy of the World War is the winsome portrait of Quentin Roosevelt, presented in this book. As the youngest child, full of playfulness and humor, he was a general favorite. Mr. Roosevelt wrote how a reporter once asked Quentin about

his father, and that "canny and affable young gentleman" responded, "Yes, I see him sometimes; but I know nothing of his family life."

Certainly we would have fewer family troubles and a larger percentage of youths walking in the footsteps of noble sires if we had more fathers who joined in the children's pillow fights like this President of the United States, who also played with them in the summer barn, taught them to ride, and was their boon companion, without whom they could not have their really "best times."

Dr. C. L. Slattery has well said in the *Churchman*, "It is not often that any one is admitted to the holy of holies of a family. But to such a sacred spot the reader of this book is admitted. It is all simple and real and loving; and one cannot read the letters aloud without, now and again, a catch in one's voice. One is grateful for the vision, and prays that such a home may be typical of our American life."

In connection with our admiration of this remarkable book, it is fitting to call attention again to last week's issue of the MESSENGER. We feel keenly that those who missed the articles and stories which appeared on our pages last week, are much the poorer for the loss, and we again advise you to hunt up that Family Altar Number of your Church paper, and let its message find its way to your heart.

COMMUNICATIONS

WHEN ALL THE WORLD IS KIN

BY THE REV. HENRI L. G. KIEFFER

Christmas is the season of brotherhood. The annual remembrance of the great love wherewith our Father loved us all reminds us that we are all brothers in one family. The angels' message of "good will toward men" does not fall on unheeding ears and our hearts are filled with kindly feeling for all men and open to every cry of distress. The need of the poor in our own community; the helplessness of orphaned children; the sufferings of the starving Jews in Eastern Europe and of the starving Armenians in Western Asia; all these make an appeal that wins a quick and generous response in the Christmastide. There is a kindlier judgment of our brother's faults and a new eagerness to lighten our brother's burden and to make our brother's life the brighter. There is nothing more blessed about the Christmas season than that it touches our hearts to the spirit of brotherhood and fills them with a reflection of that love which was declared and enshrined at Bethlehem.

But what a pity that that spirit should be so transient! "It is only for thirty-six hours of the three hundred and sixty-five days," wrote Dr. Hale, "that all people remember that they are brothers and sisters, and those are the hours that we call Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. When they always remember it, it will be Christmas all the time." It is because we have forgotten, that there is such discord in the world today. *The great source of the unrest and industrial strife of today is just the lack of the spirit of brotherhood.*

Out of the Great War we had hoped for something so much better; we had hoped for the realization of that for which our soldiers fought. An American private in France endeavored in simple verses to interpret the meaning of the war, as he saw it, and he closed with these words of comfort to those who mourned at home:

"Cheer up, O grieving mothers,
And all of you who mourn,
Our dead are dead victorious
For the larger world unborn.
To them fell the task of the ages,
And, oh, how gloriously
Have they fought and died and suffered
To free Humanity.

Free from the bands and the shackles
That bound us to the past;
Free from the strife and struggle,
And to make this war the last.
Yes free, and with each man kindred
To a hundred million others,
And earth turned again to an Eden
Where men may dwell as brothers."

They fought "to make each man kin to a hundred million others"; to create a new world "where men might dwell as brothers." And how disappointed they have been! "You do not know," said an officer, recently returned from France, "how it makes us soldiers feel to return home and find the things for which we fought flaunted here at home; to have the blush of shame brought to our cheeks by what has happened at Omaha, and Chicago, and Washington; to see the representatives of capital and of labor walk out of the conference hall and leave the public's representatives sitting there alone." We have forgotten that we all are kindred, and, though peace has come with Germany, here at home we have been fighting, race against race and class against class. Oh, the shame of it! God grant that the return of the Christmastide may stir us to a sense of brotherhood that shall be strong and enduring. As for a single, happy day we "keep Christ-

mas" may we resolve, with God's help, to keep it *always*.

"Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world; to put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground; to see that your fellowmen are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to get out of life, but what you are going to give to life? Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world,—stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death,—and that the blessed Life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love? *Then you can keep Christmas. And if you keep it for a day, why not always?*"

Our Father! Thy dear name doth show
The greatness of Thy love;
All are Thy children here below
As in Thy heaven above.
One family on earth are we
Throughout its widest span:
O help us everywhere to see
The brotherhood of man.

Bring in, we pray, the glorious day
When battle-cries are stilled;
When bitter strife is swept away
And hearts with love are filled.
O help us banish pride and wrong,
Which since the world began
Have marred its peace; help us make strong
The brotherhood of man!

THE GLAD TIDINGS OF CHRISTMAS

BY THE REV. ALBERT C. SHUMAN, D. D.

Only a child, and He the Divine Child, could have made a Christmas. Christmas is purely the children's joy festival. It calls particular attention to the *child*. "Ye shall find a *babe*," just a *babe*—no more. In the flesh—our flesh—Christ came; as truly man as He was truly God; and infinite though the mystery may be, that is the truth gathering about the *Babe* wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in the manger. We can say very little more about Him than this: He was simply a babe. We cannot use any of the ordinary adjectives and say He was a royal babe, or a wealthy babe, or a promising babe, or a learned man's babe, He came just a babe to win first a mother's heart, and through that mother's heart to win His way into the very heart of mankind.

"And they—the shepherds—came with haste and found the *babe*." And they made known the saying which was spoken to them about this *Child*. Christ's birth should be to all children "good tidings of great joy" because He has come to secure for them room or a place in the world which they did not have before, and to accord them the best opportunities in learning, and science, and art, and commerce which this world affords.

The shepherds called the world's attention to the *Child*. In that far-off day none did suspect that the *Child* in the manger was to revolutionize all thought of childhood. The Magi, kneeling, brought their gifts of gold and gems, and, lo! the leaders of modern society are bringing the best treasure the nation possesses to offer at the feet of little children. If once society neglected the child, exposed the weak born, strangled the unwelcome, now the cradle has become a temple, the babe the divinity, father and mother, and teachers and friends, the Magi, and, above every kindergarten and schoolhouse is heard the angels' song of glad tidings for the children.

"And the *Child* grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." The twenty years of physical growth mean plasticity, receptiveness and ability to advance by leaps and bounds. Therefore, for the *child's* sake, society exists today. Every law and institution revolves around the cradle. For the child's sake all the factories are set up and the harvests sown and reaped; to instruct the child all books are written and schools founded; to inspire the child Sunday Schools are conducted, Christmas celebrations held, and all songs are sung, and all worship in the sanctuary is maintained. All children should be given to God and His service early in life.

Christ's presence makes the humblest place a true home. When the parents of Jesus arrived at the inn they found no guest chamber. The inn proper was crowded. So Jesus was born where the cattle lodged. The helplessness and indigence of the new-born Infant were overruled by Divine

Providence so as to certify that birth. His birth was mean on earth below, but it was celebrated with hallelujahs by the heavenly host in the air. He had a poor lodging, but star-lighted visitors came to it from distant countries. Compare the scanty provisions for personal comfort with the adoration and offerings of the Eastern Magi; the lowly scene in the stable and the magnificent exhibition in the celestial regions.

It was fitting that He who came to feed the hungry and redeem the poor should so make Himself one of them that He was born and cradled just as the poorest babies in all the land have been from time immemorial. Poverty cannot be as great a misfortune and handicap as we think, or God, who was so very careful about His Son's surroundings and training, would not have put Him into a home of such poverty as St. Luke reveals.

Home is created slowly, with the coming and the going of the years. The greatest hope that can touch the home, the hope that takes away its walls and makes it an everlasting place, is the hope of the life which is found in Christ and sustained by Him. Is your heart ready? Then He will come and dwell with you. The proclamation of Christ's birth on earth should be an occasion of joy because He has come to secure to us a home above.

The first Christmas family that was ever gathered together in this world was gathered around the Child Jesus in the manger. This early Christmas family group is one of surpassing interest and attractiveness. It is in keeping with our innermost sentiments and profoundest sympathies. It is not too much to apply the term *domestic religion* to these periodical Christmas gatherings in the home. True affection is stimulated, sustained and kept in exercise by these annual home gatherings and observances. The household with Christ in it is the parents' kingdom. The Christian family gives a practical solution to all the great problems of moral truth.

Christmas inspires within us the desire to worship and to bear testimony to Jesus in the temple. Every Christmas carol is the echo of the angels' song. There is no news equal to the news of Christmas. It is inseparably identified with the highest joy and purest worship. What is it that distinguishes the glad tidings of Christmas from the tidings of Easter, or of Ascension, or of Whit Sunday? It is this, that the Son of God has come into the world, and come as a Son of Man, and come not for a day, or for a year, but to be ever with us unto the end of time: Emmanuel, God with us. Like the aged Simeon and Anna, let us seek the Lord in the sanctuary, and pray Him to come into our hearts, and fill us with peace and joy, and gentleness, and goodness, and to make our hearts and lives a copy of His own. For, surely, the lesson of joy which the Incarna-

tion gives us is as impressive as the lesson of humility. Let us worship and adore Him in the beauty of holiness. Let us seek the grace of a cheerful heart, an even temper, sweetness, gentleness and brightness of mind, as walking in His light, and by His grace. Let us pray Him to give us the spirit of ever-abundant, ever-springing love and that

Christmas spirit of worship which overpowers and sweeps away the vexations of life by its own richness and renewed strength, and which, above all things, invites us to Him who is the Fountain and Center of all Mercy, Lovingkindness and Joy.

Tiffin, O.

CHRISTIAN OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS

BY THE REV. CALVIN M. DELONG

Someone has said that, "A visitor from a neighboring planet might be long in learning of the religious character of Christmas from the social festivities of the day." Is not this criticism of the celebration of our Lord's birthday just? It is the one Christian holiday that is observed almost universally, but more as a social occasion than as a religious festival. Much of the modern Christmas spirit is worldly and mercenary. In many respects the Christian's Christmas has made little advance over its pagan prototype, the Roman Saturnalia, where there also were feasting, merrymaking, revelry and an exchange of gifts.

No Puritan gloom, of course, should mar the keeping of the feast of the Nativity. To observe it religiously does not mean that a shadow be cast over the happy family reunions. No one would exclude from our homes kindly old Santa Claus and lessen the joy of the children. Merry jest and harmless sport have their place. Indeed, in the broad sense, good humor, hospitality and altruism are religious, and react with an uplifting influence upon humanity.

But we cannot celebrate our Lord's birth properly, *if we leave out the thought of Christ*. Jesus is not honored through secular festivities. If Christmas is to us only a time of excess, revelry and worldly joy, we really worship heathen gods and lose sight of the religious character of the day.

As the Babe was in the midst of the little group at Bethlehem, so the thought of the birth of Christ permeates a sane and serious celebration of Christmas. Santa Claus, the Christmas tree, elaborate decorations, cannot take the place of the Christ Child. Jesus must be born again in every heart. The rehearsal of the sweet story of old will help us to become better Christians. The customs and usages that have grown up around this festival will be sanctified by the infusion of Christ's spirit.

What is the source of real Christmas joy? What should be the significance of the kindness and happiness written on the world's face on Christmas morn? He has the true Christmas spirit who greets his friends with the words, "Merry Christmas," meaning, "Rejoice with me; for unto us is born this day a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

Today we are celebrating the birth of Him who is the Redeemer of mankind, the hope of the world. Without this conviction our happy family gatherings, our social festivities, are meaningless.

How much of our Christmas giving is not Christian! There is a gift-giving that is mere gift-exchanging. Often there is complaint because of an unfair exchange of presents. What about a gift that is given in the spirit of a "deal"? God gave us His Son out of love, and because of our need. The wise men laid gold, frankincense and myrrh at the feet of the Infant Jesus. *What do we give to Christ?* The real Christmas gift is bestowed in the same spirit that prompted God to send His Son into a sinful world. Christmas challenges us to large, unselfish giving. The appeal of the orphan is the voice of the Christ Child. Our gifts to the Red Cross and kindred organizations are used by the good Physician in healing men's bodies and souls. By supporting Christian missions we cause Jesus to be born again in heathen lands. The best gift we can possibly give is to dedicate our hearts, our love, our all to Christ's service.

The real Christmas spirit manifests itself through brotherhood and love. When Jesus was born the angels sang, "On earth peace, good-will toward men." Shall we not hear this same song above the din, confusion and turmoil of a disturbed world on Christmas, 1919? There is nothing that we crave more today than peace. But peace is conditioned by goodwill among men. We are helping in the fulfillment of this prophecy not so much by giving Christmas dinners to the poor and establishing bread-lines, as by *removing the causes of our economic unrighteousness*. International justice and good-will are greater factors in preserving the peace of the world than any number of formal treaties, however valuable in themselves these may be. The Christ in our midst bids us, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Only by spreading the spirit of love and brotherhood can we usher in the reign of the Prince of Peace.

East Greenville, Pa.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS

BY THE REV. W. SHERMAN KERSCHNER

Jesus said concerning Himself: "I am the *light* of the world. He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the *light* of life." "He that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the *light* believe on the *light*, that ye may become sons of *light*. Everyone that doeth evil hateth the *light*, and cometh not to the *light*, lest his works should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the *light*, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God." "When I am in the world I am the *light* of the world." "If a man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the *light* of this world. But if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because the *light* is not in him."

Others said of Him: "The people that sat in darkness saw a great *light*, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did the *light* spring up." "The day-spring from on high hath visited us, to shine upon them

that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." "There was the true *light*, even the *light* which lighteth every one coming into the world." "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a *light* for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

Christmas is the anniversary of the birthday of *Light*. Gross darkness had covered the people, and the index on the dial of prophecy pointed to the advent of One who was to bring with Him the formula for dissipating the darkness of the world. The dreary gap between Malachi and Matthew shows inspiration at a low ebb; the careful cataloguing of human sins in the early chapters of Romans—how modern it reads!—is evidence that blackest Erebus possessed men's hearts and minds. The story of the Jericho Road could have been recorded of every highway in the Roman Empire; the profligacy of the times was portrayed in the

parable of the Prodigal Son; autocratic Pharisaism everywhere raised its dark form among the very people through whom the Messiah was to come; the prophets had become as those "without honor"; the priests had prostituted the very altar of Jehovah; the kings had sold out the theocracy in favor of mountain witches and pagan rulers. How dark the night! No device of man was able to illuminate the darkness or dispel the gloom! But let us ring down the curtain upon this dismal scene.

Not in all the history of the world could a better time have been chosen for the advent of the *light* of the world. If life is the message of Easter, then *light* is the message of Christmas. The Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in His wings. Not without reason did the artists of the Holy Madonna halo that sacred infant head, for that life was the *light* for which the world was waiting. He came and illumined what was dark. Where men doubted, His coming brought faith; where men strove in titanic throes, His coming brought peace and good will; where men oppressed the poor and stoned those that were sent unto them, He brought the Golden Rule; when a narrow world scorned the associations of a "wine-bibber" with publicans and sinners, He brought a sweet fellowship which recognized not the darkness of caste; from him whose eyes had never beheld the beauties of a fair world He brought forth the testimony, now universal,—“whereas once I was blind, now I see”; on mountain, sea and plain, “o’er moor and fen, o’er crag and torrent,” He showed the new and better way, and gave to a sin-sick and bedraggled world all that it needs to bring it from darkness into *light*. Yet there were many who would not turn their eyes toward Him, but preferred darkness to *light*, for their ways were evil. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” Eyes that were weary and hearts that were sore looked not unto Jesus, but rather sorrowed more. The fault then, as today, was not in the *light*, but in the benighted souls that would not forsake their dark ways.

The records of the plagues in Exodus gives us these significant words: “They saw not another, neither rose any from his place for three days; *but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*” In other words, the difference between the children of Israel and the children of Egypt was the difference between light and darkness. Such is also the difference between the lover of the Lord and the scoffer at the Good Tidings. No one can say he sees and loves whose vision and sympathy do not reflect the Christ. Such is also the difference between the Church which makes the salvation of souls its one purpose and the Church which “puts on” its strong social service, eugenics, environment program, etc., to the neglect of “*this one thing I do.*” For the Church which really saves souls will find more opportunity for social service and for improving environments than it can well take care of. Such is also the difference between legislative and “soap-and-water” reform and that passion which will not stop short of applying the blood which

“Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed hosts of God
Are saved to sin no more.”

“Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Jesus Christ is the only hope for a world groping in the darkness of sin, strife and selfishness; Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man, between truth and error, between love and hatred, between altruism and avarice, between right and might, between *light* and *darkness*. The world needs to try *Him*—for *all else has failed, and will fail*. Let us, therefore, remember Christmas as the birthday of Him Who alone can satisfy humanity’s greatest need, the *light* which lighteth everyone that cometh into the world.”

York, Pa.

“BRING CHRISTMAS BACK TO CHRIST”

BY THE REV. DAVID DUNN

Hasn't it slipped away?

Perhaps you warm your faith as you tramp the festive streets in mid-December with the thought that at least through His birthday, the preparation for it and the celebration of it, Christ is getting the world that He claims. For, look! The great department stores are ablaze and aglitter with the holiday extravaganza. Shops, little and big, beam out through their window-eyes on thronged avenues and the tint of green mingles cheerily with the glint of flame. Everything puts on or puts out extras and all life seems glorious and glad. And is all this not in honor of His Birthday, a response to the breathing of His Spirit? Conventional interpreters have so explained it. Commerce and industry, men and groups of men, of all types and shades, through their very interests and activities, pay homage at Christmastide to the Babe of Bethlehem.

But would not prophets, built after Amos or Elijah patterns, give us another interpretation? Would they not see in it all the stealing away of our Christmas from its original and intended place at the hearth-fire of religion and the using of it as a brilliant varicolored fragrant cover for the enrichment of a few at the expense of the many through pandering to the pride and the cravings of the old and the young? And would such prophets see amiss?

Does it require very keen observation to notice that in Christmas advertising and display, and in the general zest for the distinctive features and associations of the season the Jew can usually outdo the Christian, and that the pagan, be he a member of the Church or not, labors under no particular handicap when it comes to making Christmas pay?

Granted that it is the Master’s Spirit that prompts in men the desire to give, the fact still stands that the selling

agencies of the nation have pretty well succeeded in turning an ever greater part of that desire into such channels as will yield them tribute and more tribute.

Are they to be blamed? Only as are all those who seize chances solely because they can. And they can because we let them, we, so much of whose Christmas thought and energy is consumed over questions as to what we shall give that cousin or that neighbor, that we’re sure they will like or that will measure up well with what they have been giving us, or over how we shall deck our walls or our dinner tables. How much better even the child’s mystic expectancy of something that may come to him, something to wait and hope for! It is this frenzy to buy, to bargain, to plan, to arrange, to devise, that brings irritation and exhaustion to salesfolk and purchasers alike, and that brings them to a Christmas in which Christ can find scant room.

The prophetic warning is then not only for the commercializers who carry our Master’s birth-feast away—whither we know quite well—but for us who allow it to be done. And to stop the process *we must change ourselves, our habits of thought and action. We must do our part to bring Christmas back to Christ.* Through two gates, two vestibules, two corridors must we reclaim it from the arcades and emporiums where long enough it has been held captive—through the CHURCH and through the HOME.

Shall not the Church demand some of this day for her Lord—big dinners, gift-distributions notwithstanding? A service on Christmas eve for worship rather than for “entertainment” or “exercises,” an early morning carol of praise on Christmas Day, the ringing of bells early and late, the use of tasteful publicity to remind the multitudes through the mail and by public posters Whose Birthday it

is, the visitation of the poor and the relieving of their needs in Christ's name, the challenging of the world to remember His little ones, the orphans, the reconsecrating of lives to the principles of justice and the Prince of Peace; in these and in many other ways must the Church strive, humbly but boldly, to bring Christmas back to Christ.

But the ultimate brooding-place of Christ's Birthday spirit is, after all, the home. Through its hallowed halls must Christmas be led gently yet firmly back to Him. He came into a home, His own, to make homes holy. His rightful place is in each home of ours and Christmas should

be the day of days to confirm that place and to impress His Power and Love. Isn't this, then, the pre-Christmas question of paramount importance to us: *How shall we prepare, that Christmas Day may be an ideal day of peaceful, Christ-like family fellowship*, not necessarily immured within our residence walls, but centered there, and unclouded by fatigue, unscathed by selfish wants or piques—a day that will put back the Christ in Christmas and keep Christmas with and of the Christ!

Turtle Creek, Pa.

FOLLOWING THE STAR

BY THE REV. A. M. GLUCK

The world into which Christ came contained a number of seekers after truth. Joseph and Mary, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna were looking for the consolation of Israel. As soon as the lowly shepherds had heard the heavenly message among the Judean hills, they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph and the Babe lying in a manger. Wise Men from the East followed the star until it came and stood over the place where the Christ Child lay. It is a significant fact that all these seekers after truth came at last to the manger cradle and went away with the consciousness that they had found that for which they had been seeking.

Of all these seekers none are more interesting than these Wise Men from the East. Their strange pilgrimage is celebrated in picture and play, in song and story. The record of this unique event in the history of the world is one of the priceless possessions of our Christian heritage.

We know little of these Wise Men from the East, whose wonderful journey we commemorate with the Festival of the Epiphany, but this we can say of them: they displayed just those virtues which we need today. They showed insight, they showed courage, they showed liberality, and because they followed the right star, and followed it to the end, they achieved the joy which the world can neither give nor take away. These pilgrims made their search as wise, earnest, generous men, and they found the answer to their quest in the Child of Bethlehem.

They showed *insight*. No doubt the bush on the plains of Midian had burned for a long time, but not until there came a Moses who was concerned enough to stop and inquire why the bush was not consumed did the voice of God become audible. A new star burned in the eastern skies on the night of the Nativity, and three men had wisdom enough to discern its spiritual meaning and followed its gleam and found the place where the Christ Child lay. And so it has been ever since. Men of spiritual insight lead the world to better things. The Church cried aloud for reformation, and Luther and Zwingli and Calvin answered the cry and led the way for the re-establishing of Christianity upon a spiritual basis. Not long ago the star of honor and justice and mercy flamed out in our national sky, and we followed the gleam until it led us to the fields of sacrifice that the world might find a new birth of freedom and that the things of Christian civilization might be preserved to all generations, and today we have the consciousness that we were right when we followed the gleam.

They showed *courage*. Nothing is told us of the discouragements that these men met, but that they had them we may be sure; every worthy undertaking is beset with difficulties. And this is especially true of spiritual undertakings. Their Chaldean neighbors told them that their undertaking was folly; they crossed wide deserts; they forded deep rivers; they made their way through dangerous countries; they thought that when they reached Judea their troubles would all be over, the roads would be thronged with pilgrims going to Jerusalem, the crowds would be singing songs, Jerusalem would be illuminated because their King was born. But the roads were empty, they could not catch the notes of a single song, and the streets of the city

were dark. There were a thousand things to discourage them. But with magnificent enthusiasm they persevered—nothing could baffle them or daunt them or dismay them—and they came to their desired haven. And the secret of their perseverance is in the fact that they were following a star. Had they been guided by anything else than that they would have given up long before they reached Jerusalem. Do you think that if they had read about this King in some of their Chaldean libraries that they would have carried them to the manger? They lost their way when they reached Jerusalem and turned aside to inquire of men where the new King should be born, but just as soon as they turned from men again the star went before them until it came and stood over the place where the young Child lay. It needed more than earth to carry them through; it needed the bright and becoming radiance of the sky; they were strong because their guidance was a star. "And if they battled bravely, and journeyed with zeal unquenchable, and if nothing could turn them from their unheard-of quest, it was because they followed, not a light of earth, but a light that was hung aloft by God." We will never be able to keep the way of life in our earthly pilgrimage unless we follow the light that shines from God's holy Word.

And because the Wise Men had spiritual insight, because they had dauntless courage, they came to the house at last and found the satisfaction of their desires. They undertook their quest in dim, uncertain starlight. They had some intimation that a Messiah would come. They had learned the name of the country where He was to be born. They followed up this clue by diligent, persistent search. At last they knelt before the One they sought and rose up ennobled and enriched. The man who takes his own uncertain vision of God, of the divine purpose for Him, of the privileges he might enjoy at the hands of spiritual reality and follows on, will find at last that which satisfies the deepest longings of his soul.

In our quest we are in many ways like the Wise Men of old. We have been hoping for a day of universal peace. Is it about to dawn? We trust it is. Life is full of sorrows. Why do they come? Our religion tells us that they are working for us an exceeding weight of glory. What does the future hold for us? We do not know. We are promised that "we shall be satisfied," and surely that is enough. Let us "follow the star" and our fondest hopes will be realized.

"Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on."

Our night may be very long, but a new day is going to come, and until the glad morning comes, let us thank God for the Star, and follow its gleam.

Martinsburg, W. Va.

Oratory is the science of effective speech.—R. H. Conwell.

HOME AND YOUNG FOLKS

MY GIFTS

Alas, I lack the wherewithal
To send a Christmas Gift to all,
And yet no treasure of the mart
Hath value like the Gifts of Heart,
And to the world in which I live
Of these 'tis possible to give—
A word of comfort and relief
To those in the harsh grip of grief;
A hand of sympathy for those
Who stagger under countless woes,
A bit of hope to ease the care
Of all surrounded by despair;
A friendly smile for those in stress
To lighten hours of loneliness,
And unto all a portion of
The bounty of that endless love
The Day bespeaks, that greater grows
As through the heart of grace it flows,
Until in overwhelming flood
It finds the Sea of Brotherhood.

—John Kendrick Bangs

A BIRTH AT BEIT LAHM—A CHRISTMAS PARABLE

By George E. Huntley, D. D.

One cut in wood of olive and one in shining pearl. Brothers they were, dwelling in Beit Lahm, sons of old Kevork, Armenian man of skill, themselves masters of their craft. Vartan Azadian, the elder, wrought from choice wood such rare crucifixes as must stir the enthusiasm of the artist or awaken the fervor of the man of faith; but his brother, Ohannes, was one of the company of Bethlehemites reproducing in mother-of-pearl the greatest works of religious art.

Very proud they had been of each other and very faithful in their fraternity. Kevork often said that either son would give his life for the other and, looking steadfastly eye to eye, the stalwart, handsome boys would pledge unswerving loyalty. It seemed unthinkable that anything even for a moment could cloud their mutual love.

Yet came the day of sorrow, temptation and humiliation. Vartan had learned from the venerable Gregorian priest a Christmas couplet, and, as he sat at work in his dingy little shop on a narrow side street, the words repeated themselves over and over in his mind:

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,

If He's not born in thee, thy soul is all forlorn."

"Is He really born in me? O, I wonder! Is He born in Ohannes? Is He born in dear Aunt Siranoush? Is He born in Heripsime, my beloved?" He thought again of Ohannes; he thought again of Heripsime; and a look, strange and wild, passed over his face. Quickly, however, he put aside whatever unworthy suspicion had distressed him. He turned to his brother, who had stepped in from his shop across the way.

"What think you, Ohannes? Do you believe that our religion is pure and undefiled? Do you feel certain that the Christ has really been born in your heart and my heart?"

The younger man looked up, laughing at first and then becoming serious. "Of you, Vartan, I have no doubt. But I am a light-hearted fellow and, I fear me, a light-headed fellow, as well."

"No," replied his brother, "it is for

myself and not for you that I tremble. It is a queer conceit that I have; but many a time, as I stand here with the face of the Master on my copy, it seems to smile at me with marvelous invitation and depth of yearning; and, again, it seems to express an unutterable sadness, as though I shared with Peter in his denial and desertion. I think that I am not worthy."

"If you are not, none are. You are over-weary. Give up your thought of self, which is not good for body or mind, and enter into the joy of this happy season." So he passed out, turning down the steep roadway toward the market-place.

Vartan watched him go, then caught his breath, flushed and stepped to the little door. For a moment his face was dreadfully distorted. "Why goes he to the market at such an hour? No errand calls him there. Goes he to see someone? A maid? Goes he to see—ah, Mother Mariam!—is it Heripsime?" Even as he spoke, there passed on the other side, with shy glances toward his shop, a young Armenian damsel, with radiant eyes and jet-black hair, supremely beautiful and graceful.

Her lover rushed away from his door, stifled, blinded. He threw himself upon his rug in jealous frenzy. "It is even so," he cried. "In my soul I have known it! Together they have been a dozen times of late! He seeks to steal the jewel of my heart! It is by no mere chance that they meet to-day!"

When the brothers sat together at night, Vartan was strangely silent. Puzzled by his mood, Ohannes put him to question; but no explanation could he gain. And for days, the man who had been the very incarnation of strength and good cheer grew morose and distraught. Heripsime marveled at his absence, but, according to the custom of the land, could seek no message. Ohannes tried to solve the mystery, but his every word was misinterpreted and his every advance was received with coldness. When the younger man sought out Heripsime, trying to learn if there had been a lover's quarrel, jealous eyes followed him and, in the meeting, found confirmation of every fear.

A strange unseasonable cloud hung over the hills toward Jerusalem. The hand of the carver lost its cunning and anon could do no work. On the model, the face of the Crucified One seemed to speak of surprise and reproach. And ever, by night and day, came the haunting refrain,

"If He's not born in thee, thy soul is all forlorn."

Forlorn indeed was the soul of the man who was growing to hate his brother.

The work of Ohannes was now upon a carving far surpassing in beauty and dignity any which he had hitherto dared to undertake; he was copying in mother-of-pearl the "Last Supper," by da Vinci. His father, Kevork, had wrought it once and it had been his masterpiece. Some of the other skilled artists of Beit Lahm had essayed the task with success only indifferent. Now for months Ohannes had carved, with ever-growing fervor, until, as his task approached completion, he was loving forth the form and face of the Christ. They who came to look declared that never in Palestine had such masterly work been done. "You shall be great, Ohannes," they cried, "great here and great in all the world!" And now his

brother brooded upon this coming glory, his former pride turning to loathing, and he thought how easily a famous artist could win the heart of a maiden—of such a maiden, alas, as Heripsime.

Then came (who can say how or from whence?) the lurking thought of evil. It would be such an easy thing to do—the task of an instant to destroy the work of half a year. It would be so simple to enter the brother's work-room when he was absent (probably to be with Heripsime, for he had seen them in company more than once, earnestly conversing). With a single motion he could dash the carving to the floor. Then where would be the pride of this faithless artist? Could a maiden be won with a mass of fragments?

At first the unworthy suggestion was put aside, but it came again and again. Vartan began to think that it was almost his duty to do the deed, that he was but an agent of Heaven to wreak vengeance on one who would steal a brother's bride. Soon the obsession grew until he no longer asked himself whether he would do it, but only when and how.

On the eve of Christmas it was that impulse and opportunity met. Ohannes was gone—where he was gone Vartan thought it no difficult matter to guess. To enter the shop would be easy for him; he knew it as his own. Before the clock should mark one-tenth of an hour, he could be back in safety, justice done.

Trembling as one with palsy, he opened his door; and he noticed that yet over the hills of Palestine hung the strange cloud, as though in boding of evil. With stealth he crossed to his brother's shop and entered by a way well-known to all the family.

In the dark room he could barely perceive the outlines of room and furnishings. Yes, here was the work-bench. Yes, here was the pearl, covered with care, just as the man of skill had left it at nightfall. He removed the cloth and lifted the treasure, his lips parched and his feverish eyes gleaming. "Ah! one moment, and where will be the glory of this false artist!"

Vartan stood, the masterpiece already held high for its destruction, when a great wonder happened. Shall we say, after the Oriental fashion, that he heard a message from Heaven? Or shall we agree with prosaic men of science that the experience was all in his own soul, the result of imagination overwrought? At any rate, to Vartan it was absolutely real. At his side sounded a voice, richer, sweeter, more searching, than any that ever had fallen upon his ear. Very loving, yet sadly reproachful, and it said,

"If He's not born in thee, thy soul is all forlorn."

He lowered his hands with their precious burden and stood transfixed. "Who is it?" he cried. "Who is here?" There was no answer. He expected none; for he knew that he was in no human presence. "Who is it?" he cried again. "Who speaks the poem that condemns?" And in the silence Vartan was made sane.

Then he remembered that Ohannes had ever been honorable and just; that Heripsime was not really his own, as there had been no betrothal; that indeed he never had confided to his brother the fact of his surpassing love. How petty now, in the moment of self-understanding, seemed the jealousy that had seared his heart!

How he yearned again to clasp Ohannes in fraternal embrace! Removed a million miles seemed the deed that a few moments ago he had been about to perform.

"Let him have her, let him have her!" he exclaimed, "if that is for their joy. And my blessing be upon them forever!"

The transformed man replaced the pearly picture and started to restore the covering, when a new amazement filled his soul. "Master," he cried, "Master, is it even so? Canst Thou indeed smile at thy servant whose hands are stained with sin and whose heart is defiled with hatred?" For in the darkened room it seemed to him that the face of the Christ became luminous and that from the carven eyes shone forth a love beyond all love of men. Long he looked, the wonder growing as new depths of yearning and approval blessed him from the sacred face.

"Master, my Master," he cried, "find in this heart some poor manger for Thy birth! Come and dwell in me and make me wholly Thine!"

At last he tore himself away. "I must go," he told himself. "I have an errand from which even the Christ must not detain me. I must confess all unto my brother!"

On the street of Beit Lahm they met. "Let us walk to the hillside," said Vartan, "I have somewhat to say to you." "And I," said Ohannes, "have somewhat to say to you; for this is my hour of joy." So they walked to that wonderful eminence, from which one may look far to the east and far to the north over the rolling plains to the hills of Judea.

"Tell me of your joy first," said the elder brother, "for my tale is long and I have many things to reveal both of sadness and of gladness."

"Give me your hand," said Ohannes, "for this night the desire of my heart is fulfilled; the maid of my love, with her father's consent, has promised to be my bride."

For a moment all the old jealousy and hatred surged back into the heart of Vartan, and the impulse was strong to seize the other by the throat. But he remembered the voice and the vision and regained his soul. Quietly he said, "My blessing, Ohannes, my blessing! Heripsime truly is beautiful and good."

The younger man started. "Heripsime?" he exclaimed, "Heripsime? What is it, brother, that you think?" Then suddenly came understanding. "Dear Vartan, my more than brother, is it this over which your heart has been breaking? It is not Heripsime for whom I have sought, sweet and noble as she is. She is yours, I think, if you desire. It is her sister, the gentle Arousiag, for whom my heart has yearned."

A strong man wept and was not ashamed. Nor did his brother esteem him less. When self-control had been regained Vartan told of all the weeks of misery; told, too, of the plot of vengeance which had come so nearly to completion. "Can forgiveness and love ever be given for a brother so blind and so ignoble?" he cried.

"Yes, I would have forgiven freely, even had you dashed to pieces the best-prized work of my hands. Yes, I shall love you with even deeper love, only pitying for the great suffering that you have endured. But, tell me why, when the pearl was in your hands, you did not dash it to destruction?"

"It was because Christ was born in Beit Lahm." Then he told him of the arresting word in the darkness and of the smile on the face of the Christ; and together the two men marveled exceedingly.

"See!" exclaimed Vartan, turning toward Jerusalem, "the clouds have disappeared! How rich and beautiful is the

blue! It seems infinite, like the peace in my own heart!"

Suddenly he seized his brother by the arm. "Look, look!" he cried, "the Star, the Star!"

"Yes, the Star!" Ohannes agreed, with quick intuition, though he saw it not.

Vartan stood erect, tense, his face transformed. "I believe—I believe—I believe I hear celestial music! I believe I hear the choirs of Heaven singing of peace and good-will among men!"

(The End)

ONE TREE FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

Alice May Douglas

Oh, if I could but plant all trees

That in this wide world grow,
I'd plant just one kind every time—
But what kind you don't know.

I'd make each day an Arbor Day—

And merry Christmas, too;
And I would just plant Christmas trees—
For every spot they'd do.

And all the fruit that they would bear

Would be fine books and toys
And candy bags and popcorn balls
For little girls and boys.

—The Sunbeam

A CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM ARMENIA

(This is one of the most pathetic appeals I have recently seen. It tells the story of a very real and very present need.—Editor.)

Dear Friend:—

Another little child has shriveled up and died.

The mother, creeping back, gaunt and cold, from the desert, has put down the thin little bones with those that strew the road so many miles, and has sunk beside them, never to rise again.

Only a little child, and a mother, out on the bleak Armenian road—but what is that Vision hovering there—and what is that Voice the cold winds bear to the ears of our souls—"I was hungry, and ye

gave me no meat—I was naked and ye clothed me not."

Today—yes, today, while we are preparing our gifts for Christ-mas—many more of these little children—not a hundred, nor a thousand, but **two hundred and fifty thousand** of them, are still wandering uncared for and alone in that dead land, "their weakened skins clinging in fear to their rattling bones," and they are crying out with gasping breath, "I am hungry—I am hungry!" And the Voice of One who watches us as we prepare gifts to celebrate His birthday comes again to the ears of our souls—"I am hungry—I am hungry—I am hungry!"

Now the children, and the mothers, in Armenia are dreading the winter. "Just human remnants they are, not protected, many of them, from the elements by even the dignity of rags. The most favored have merely shredded rags." How shall we sing our Christ-mas songs—and laugh—and light the candles—and give beautiful gifts—while that pleading Voice cries in the ears of our souls—"I am naked—and cold!—naked—and cold!"

But we can feed and clothe those perishing ones—some of them—before it is too late. Herbert Hoover has cabled from the Caucasus, "It is impossible that the loss of 200,000 lives can at this day be prevented, but the remaining 500,000 can possibly be saved." They need not starve, and freeze, and die if we will save them. In the name of Him who saw the multitude "as sheep not having a shepherd, and was moved with compassion toward them," who exclaimed, when His disciples would turn them away, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat!" open now your heart and purse and give to these Christians whom He loves—who are suffering for Him, and with whom He is suffering. They need not die! Give ye them to eat!

Fifteen dollars a month (\$180 a year) will provide food, clothes, shelter and education toward self-support for one orphan child.

Ten dollars a month (\$120 a year) will provide food, clothes and shelter for one orphan child.

Five dollars a month (\$60 a year) will provide food for one orphan child.



Teach Him to Smile Again

.....

In an Orphanage of

NEAR EAST RELIEF

1 Madison Ave. N.Y.C.

He fed five thousand hungry people in the wilderness—and said to His followers, "The things that I do shall ye do also, and greater things than these shall ye do." Today nearly eight hundred thousand destitute Armenians—His people—need food and clothing.

He took little children in His arms and blessed them. Today will you take one, or more, of these sad, cold, hungry little children of Armenia into your arms and heart, in His name, and give them food, and warmth, and life?

What a joyful Christ-mas it will be when, with your songs and your laughter, you hear a Voice of wondrous sweetness speaking to you, "O ye blessed of My Father, I was hungry and ye gave Me meat. I was naked and ye clothed Me. Inasmuch as ye have done it to these My brethren, ye have done it to Me."

The pledge card for your Christmas gift to Him is here in this letter.

In His Name,

Faithfully yours,

L.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

I love to think of the Christmas tree

Of the long, long time ago,
Trimmed with its wonderful ornaments

That were made by hand so slow—
The paper chains, so colored and fine,
And the angels with golden wings,
The gingerbread men and the cotton dolls,
And the old-time home-made things!

There were no gaudy and tinsel strands,
No glowing globes of light,
In those days of the simple Christmas joys,

But the old-time tree was bright!
An angel made of a paper sheet
Swung high in the topmost bough,
And, oh, there was something fine and sweet

In the homely things, somehow!

Around the base there were farmyard scenes,

All whittled with patient care,
And fitted in with a loving wish
And many a whispered prayer;
And the children laughed and the children leaped

When they marched downstairs at morn—

And I hear, I hear that music still
Of the drum and the wee tin horn!

—F. McK., in Baltimore Sun

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

By Alliene S. DeChant

Christmas is the happiest season in the whole year because it is the home-coming season—the love season. Our big sister comes home from college, our seminary brother sends word he will be home Christmas eve, and Fred at prep school goes so far as to tell us on which train to expect him! Oh! Christmas is a happy time, and how we "Messenger" boys and girls enjoy it! It is so good to have the family together again, and even if big brother and sister tease us, we don't mind, for along with the teasing come hugs and kisses, and we like that best of all, don't we?

But suppose we boys and girls had no homes in which to be happy on Christ's birthday? Suppose we had no father and no mother to feed and clothe us and send us to school? Suppose when we are sick we had no mother to smooth our pillow for us and comfort us, and no father to see to it that we had the best doctor and the very best medicine?

Over in Armenia there are boys and

girls, hundreds of them just our age, who are starving—boys and girls who have no fathers and no mothers, no one to feed and clothe them, no one to send them to school. We who always have plenty of food to eat and plenty of warm clothes to wear will never know what it means to go hungry and naked. Just think how hungry we are after school and how we make a bee-line for the pantry as soon as we come home! How would we feel if there were days, instead of several hours, when we did without food?

Here's how we boys and girls of the Forward Movement, at Christmas time, can help: We can plan to get \$5 a month from our parents, our aunts and uncles or our grandparents, or earn part of it ourselves, and give it to the Armenian Relief Committee to save the life of one Armenian child. Or perhaps our Sunday School class might earn \$5 each month and adopt a starving orphan. Or better yet, our class might earn enough money at one supper or entertainment to keep a child for a whole year! That costs but \$60. Wouldn't that be fine? That would be a real service and would show the best kind of Forward Movement spirit! Let's do it and begin right now in this Christmas season! Let's bring it about that our orphan learns to know the joy of being cared for, of being loved. And by giving we will be getting, not money returns, but heart returns, love returns that are worth far more than dollars and cents.

Let's be some Armenian boy or girl's BIG BROTHER or BIG SISTER!

"Reformed Church Messenger" birthday greetings this week to Frances Shrum, of Mauertown, Virginia, whose tenth birthday anniversary was on December 12.

THE TREE

Baby sister wasn't here
When our Christmas came last year;
So she doesn't know at all
Why we're waiting in the hall;
Why the door is closed between
Us out here, and something green,
Standing just inside the door.
(My! I wish they'd hurry more!)

I am six, but baby's none,
'Cause she isn't even one,
When you're six, you're most a man—
Head holds more than babies' can,
But your legs is only boys';
Stockings can't hold all your toys,
So the big things have to be
Hung up on a Christmas tree.

Hear the footsteps on the floor—
Some one's coming to the door!
Mother voice says, "Let them in."
Oh, my! oh, my! how long they've been!
Baby, look! The knob is turning,
Door is open, candles burning!
Full of things for you and me—
Look! It's your first Christmas tree!

—Julian Street in Everybody's

A NEW NOTE

By Harry M. Chalfant

The approaching Christmas is to be different. In a new sense it is to be white: Its music is to have a strange beautiful note that will be heard for the first time in a million homes. Its message will convey an unusual meaning. For example:

The bar room of one of the largest and best hotels in the anthracite region has been converted into two commodious store rooms. Located on the main street, this was, prior to July 1, the best patronized saloon in the city. One section is now a gents' hat store, the other a flower store. Gazing at the beautiful display in the

show window of the latter a few days ago I found myself growing reminiscent. In olden days the patrons of this place parted freely with their cash and in return therefor carried home to their families heart-aches, ravings, cruelty, indecency, poverty, sorrow, shame, guilt. Today its patrons carry away to their homes the white, the crimson, the purple flowers, inspiring emblems of hope and love, of fidelity and gentleness, of purity and peace.

To cultivate a beautiful flower in what was a few months ago a viper's den, to make roses grow this year where deadly night-shade last year grew, to wipe out the ugliness of the landscape and make it bloom like the Garden of Eden—that is what the Chief Gardener of the universe has at last induced His workmen here in America to do.

Philadelphia.

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

'Tis Christmas time and let us all
Give happiness unto mankind;
While following Christ's Golden Rule,
Life's sweetest blessings we shall find.
Make all the little children glad,
Remembering Christ loved them all,
And teach them of the Saviour's love—
How blessings on their hearts will fall.

If they will live as Jesus did,
For love of God and all mankind.
Teach them how blessed 'tis to give,
What pleasure in it they will find;
Have them upon the giving count
More than on what they will receive,
Then we can make them understand,
Christ's mission, too, sooner believe.

Teach them to think of others' needs,
And how they joy to them can bring,
And Christ will then appreciate
When we His joyous praises sing.
Make Christmas Day, as He would wish,
A perfect blessing to mankind,
When all remember Christ's great love,
And His example keep in mind.

—Martha Shepard Lippincott,
in Public Ledger

"GOD'S IN HIS HEAVEN" STILL

Louella C. Poole

O troubled hearts, forget your pain,
Your grief and loss, now once again
The merry Yule-tide brings
Its joy of giving, song and mirth
To gladden all the hearts of earth,
And once more celebrate the birth
Of our great King of Kings!

Come, little birds and friendly beasts,
And share with us the Yule-tide feasts
Earth spreads so lavishly!
O children, let your voices gay
Banish all gloom and doubt away!
Be wholly happy for this Day,
And dance around the Tree!

Ring, Christmas bells! Your message gives
Faith to believe that Truth still lives!

Ring, ring, with right good will!
For though humanity's bruised breast
Is throbbing with a wild unrest,
God's in His Heaven still!

Man longs and strives yet for the best!
—Our Dumb Animals

THE CHRIST-CHILD

The Christ-child unto the stable came
'Twixt the midnight and the morn;
His mother laid Him softly down
By the beasts of hoof and horn.
The friendly kine a-near Him stood
In the frost of the early day,
And, little Brother of all the poor,
He slept in the fragrant hay.

—Margaret E. Sangster

THE STRANGER AT THE DOOR

A Christmas Story

By George Bayard Young

(Continued from Page 2)

With anxious eyes they looked at one another. With a resolute look upon her drawn face, Mary, the Hebrew maiden, said to Joseph, "We must ride on into the night."

"Impossible," Joseph protested. "Already you are too worn to travel farther."

"But I must," she stoutly declared. "Otherwise we shall lose our little home in Nazareth, and that we can ill afford."

Joseph knew it all too well. Rome knew no pity, and particularly with her subject races. Her word was like the laws of the Medes and Persians, which altered not. Trying an ordeal as it was, there was naught else to be done. Time was so precious now that even the night must be as the day to them.

Toward midnight they and some of their neighbors from Nazareth reached a little sheltered valley and sought a few hours' rest. But with the twittering of the birds at dawn they were again on the march. Their progress was so slow as to seem almost a retracing of their steps, and yet they dared not go faster.

At last, late in the afternoon, when the western sky was all aglow with light, they came in sight of Jerusalem. For the time they forgot their extreme fatigue, forgot their sleepless night, forgot that they had scarcely tasted food for four and twenty hours. They stood transfixed! Before them, built upon seven hills, stood Jerusalem. Upon Mount Zion rose the temple, massive, golden-domed, snowy white, with her glistening marbles the wonder not alone of every faithful orthodox Jew, but of all the world. Today the city and the temple, bathed in the glory of the setting sun, shone resplendent. Nothing could add to their beauty.

Familiar as were both Joseph and Mary with the centuries of their nation's history, they saw pass in review before them the long line of kings who had lived and reigned in this capital city. Their good deeds shone out upon the canvas of the past like brilliant stars upon a dark night, while their deeds of depravity were like a dreadful nightmare which was well nigh unforgettable. Prophets, too, rose up before the travelers' eyes, strong, fearless, the beacon lights of their generation. As hidden treasures were their writings, so carefully preserved in the ancient Jewish manuscripts and so faithfully memorized from the tender years of childhood.

This was holy ground! But tarry they dared not. The sands in the hour-glass were few and six miles yet remained before them. Around the green slopes of the Mount of Olives they passed. Over this self-same road King David, then grand-sire, had marched with his conquering host. The feet of Naomi and the royal Ruth had also made sacred this pathway that led to Bethlehem.

As the sun was about to be lost in the sea, Joseph and Mary stood at the end of their journey. A few belated travelers, like themselves, were still registering in Bethlehem. In a few moments they, too, had given a list of their belongings and were free to seek shelter for the night. A deep sigh of relief escaped from both.

Once outside the booth of registration they stood in the fast-gathering darkness with heads bowed in silent prayer. Their sense of gratitude was too deep to find expression in words.

During the last two hours the weather had suddenly changed. The warm south

wind which marked the beginning of the day and made it seem like a day in early spring, had been replaced by a sharp cold blast, which blew in angry gusts from the Great Sea, making one feel he could almost hear the wild billows break in their frothing, foaming fury upon the jagged rocks that line the coast of Joppa. Snowflakes were beginning to fill the night air.

There was but one caravansary in the little town of Bethlehem. For generations it had stood there. It was one of the familiar landmarks to every traveler, whether he came from upper Egypt or ancient Damascus. It was the common camping-ground for all. Thither the devout Joseph and Mary turned their steps. How welcome would its shelter prove on such a night as this! Yea, how tenfold welcome!

But how little they knew the man who stood supreme in this shelter of the nations, Zeresh, the grizzled, gruff, and greedy innkeeper. What a strange character, half Egyptian, half Jewish, a child of the desert, born on an oasis far out in the great desert, with the heat of the burning sands in his veins and inordinate covetousness in his heart. His father had been at one time a Jewish priest, and his mother an Egyptian fortune-teller. Repentant, his father had taught him the Hebrew scriptures and sought to rear him in the true faith, but it was as difficult as facing a sandstorm. However, one thing was certain, the inn which Zeresh kept was clean. It was the pride of his life. Here men found a good resting place. True, he drove a sharp bargain with his guests, but he was obliging. By day or night he would do their bidding, but always for money.

On this memorable day, when Joseph and Mary had been approaching Bethlehem, others, able to travel faster than they, had already arrived at the inn, while they were still many miles distant. Early in the day the stream of guests had begun to ar-

rive. In Zeresh's eagerness for gain, unused places were emptied of tools and implements of all kinds, the accumulation of years. Swift change followed swift change. All possible space must be utilized. And still the guests came. Impatient at delay, he raged at his faithful hunchback wife, Miriam. She could do nothing quick enough. Twice during the day he had raised his clenched fist to strike her down, but each time she eluded him and escaped unharmed. Once an ugly blow narrowly missed the head of their three-year-old girl, who in terror was clinging to her mother's dress. "Go, you wretch," he said, as he gave her a push which sent her reeling across the floor; "go and make room for more."

Worn out in body, trembling with fear, and sick in soul, the little Jewess hurried away to prepare more room. As she was fleeing home from him, Miriam heard old Zeresh mumble to himself, "Each must pay my price this day! Each must pay my price!" Unthought-of places were cleared, and by limiting the space to each, the old inn had never given shelter to so many travelers as on this night. The eyes of the innkeeper glittered and glistened with the peculiar light of the wild beast in the forest that has caught its prey. "Caesar has served me well! Caesar has served me well! The nation's misfortune is my gain!" chuckled old Zeresh as he clinked the coins in the large leather bag which was suspended from the girdle beneath his tunic.

And yet there was room. Two rich Persian merchants, expected for the past three days, men who for the last twenty years had made this their resting-place, had not arrived. Would they still come?

PART II

And then Joseph and Mary appeared before the inn and sought admittance. But



as they stood before the darkened entrance on this cold and cheerless night, colder than the chilling wind which blew about them was their reception. Zeresh, the grizzled, gruff, and greedy innkeeper, met them under the flickering rays of two torches that were hung in the wall. Oriental politeness at first was his, as he stood face to face with these two belated travelers. A smile played about his large mouth, and a warm welcome was apparently to be theirs; but as Zeresh made a swift but careful scrutiny of them in the dim light and noted their simple garments, the smile vanished, and his face grew hard and pitiless.

Joseph stood and pleaded for admittance as only one will plead in behalf of a life-companion who is dearer than life itself. In desperation Joseph pledged Zeresh the last shekel in his purse if he could only be granted even the poorest place in the inn.

But this offer the innkeeper resolutely refused. It seemed as though the heart of Zeresh was carved out of the hardest agate.

The two strangers from Nazareth could in no way find a welcome at the hands of Zeresh. They stood outside. There was no room for them in the inn.

"This is no time to open my door to poor folk. A fool I'd be if I did not gather as many shekels as possible on such a night as this," mumbled the Bethlehem innkeeper, as he watched Joseph and Mary disappear in the darkness.

The two expected guests did not arrive. The best place stood vacant.

As Joseph and Mary turned away from the inn the darkness was doubly dark and the cheerless wind a hundredfold more cheerless.

As the birds fly to their nests when the storm is gathering, so was it with the citizens and strangers in Bethlehem.

Joseph now realized that the crisis hour in his life had come. Assuredly this night would be marked by a great tragedy unless help came and came speedily. Both were already benumbed by the increasing cold, and Joseph knew full well that this benumbment would soon be followed by that drowsiness which leads the weary traveler to lie down anywhere and go to sleep; but in such a case the sleep is that long sleep from which no one awakes in this life.

If Joseph could not gain admittance to the inn, which was supposed to receive all travelers, could he expect that any other door would be opened to him in so exceedingly small a town as Bethlehem?

He thought not. The prospects for a night's shelter seemed to him well-nigh hopeless.

With a woman's quick instinct Mary read the thoughts of her protector. Desperate as was their situation, a deep, sure calm reigned in her soul. Far above the storm which sends the clouds scudding across the sky is a calm which no storm, however violent, can reach; and many fathoms beneath the surface of the sea is a stillness so great that not a pebble nor a shell is disturbed. Thus was it in the deepest depths of Mary's soul. She was anchored in Jehovah and knew her anchor would hold. The history of the past was ingrained into her very being, and she knew that as Jehovah had delivered in the past so he would deliver now. With this unshaken conviction, she turned to Joseph, as the wind raged about them, and said:

"Fear not, Joseph. Jehovah is good and never forsakes His own. Did he not deliver David, our grandsire, from the lion's mouth? Did He not open a path through the Red Sea for our people? And He saved even Hagar, the bondwoman, from perishing in the wilderness. Has He not pledged His word saying, 'No good thing

will He withhold from them that walk uprightly'? The stars may fall, the sun and moon fail to give their light, but Jehovah's word shall never fail."

Scarcely had the words died upon her lips when a small, thinly clad urchin came bounding around the corner of one of the houses. Borne on by the force of the wind and the impetus of his running, ere he was aware he dashed pell-mell into Joseph. Sorely bruised, greatly frightened, thinking it was old Zeresh with whom he had collided, and expecting a sharp blow and still sharper words for his rudeness, the little fellow scrambled to his feet and was about to redouble his speed, when in kindest tones a voice called after his retreating figure, "We are sorry for thee, my child. Art thou badly bruised?"

It was enough. That little boy's heart flew open in a moment. Curiosity, the kindly feeling awakened by Joseph's words, the love of adventure, a hundred emotions played riot in this little lad's soul and made flight impossible till he had asked, "And who art thou? And where art thou going? Why art thou not in the inn yonder?" Patiently Joseph answered the volley of questions.

Stamping his sandal with a wrathful ring upon the hard stones of the narrow street, the bruised and bleeding boy said, "How cruel old Zeresh is! How pitiless! And such a night as this!" And then, with fine, child-like confidence, he followed the warm impulse of his heart, and placing his little hand within Joseph's he said, "Come with me. My father is a big man, the best man in the world, and he'll make room for thee."

To the outskirts of Bethlehem Joseph and Mary were led by their unexpected little guide. Up to the side of a rocky slope he brought them. In the side of a limestone hill there opened a natural gateway. Within could be seen the flickering rays of a rush-light. A man, tall, square-shouldered, muscular, was within the grotto. He stood in the midst of all his earthly goods: a small flock of sheep and lambs, a cow and her young offspring, his faithful donkey, and a shepherd dog. The unusual cold had led him to bring his animals under cover for the night. Hidden from view preparing the warm evening meal was his beloved wife, and grouped about her three small boys.

Busy scattering the straw over the stable floor and filling the manger with provender, the keeper of the grotto was unaware of the approach of strangers until his dog leaped forth into the darkness and filled the silent night with his barking. The owner quickly followed, and at the doorway of the grotto met the two strangers from far-off Nazareth in Galilee.

Micaiah, the keeper of the grotto, would have been a remarkable man in any age, but especially so in this. In these dark days, when it was a common sight to see slaves and criminals expiring in agony upon crosses set up along the great Roman highways; when the border-line between Judea and Samaria was never crossed by the orthodox Jews; when the tax-gatherer was a hated outcast; when deformed little children were left in the mountains to be eaten by wild beasts; when Roman emperor and Roman governor and high priest and Pharisee alike valued gold above God, riches above honor; this one man, this simple shepherd of the hills, with his home a grotto, stood uncorrupted.

He was a lineal descendant of that brave Micaiah who had dared to tell the truth even to the black-hearted King Ahab, though to do so meant impoverishment, imprisonment, and months of torture by slow starvation. Faithfully his descendant had followed the family traditions of love and truth and courage and a stainless life.

Quickly Micaiah realized that as birds driven by a storm seek shelter for the night anywhere, so these strangers had come to him, and he bade them welcome. Who they were and whence they had come he knew not. They were in need, and this was an all-sufficient claim upon his hospitality.

It was the established rule of his household that the best must be for his guests, whomsoever they might be. Accordingly, he led the way into a deep and high room of the grotto, upon the walls of which were suspended numberless relics of his ancestors: swords, musical instruments, drinking-cups, tattered and faded banners of his tribe, the tribe of Judah, and scores of shepherd's pipes and crooks.

Five torches, set in various parts of the large room, were soon ablaze and in their light each one of the relics could be plainly seen. Each object seemed to be telling the glorious and yet pathetic history of the past. A harp, an heirloom of more than three centuries, stood in one corner, having most of the strings broken.

Often, as Micaiah gazed upon these reminders of the past, he had mused: Would not the Master Musician arise who would reset the broken strings and reawaken the song in a repentant people? Had not the prophet declared that One would come who would give "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness"?

Built along one side of the room was a wide manger, partly filled with hay and grain. Here Micaiah spread some large, coarse, but clean blankets, while his devoted wife lost no time in preparing rice, a hot drink, olives, cheese and bread, adding a few dried figs and dates.

With that fine discernment which a loving heart ever gives, the host perceived that absolute rest was the coveted boon of his guests, and soon found excuse to retire and leave them undisturbed for the night, while he gave final attention to his ewes and lambs. As the thick curtain fell which concealed chamber from chamber in the deep cavern, Micaiah lifted his forefinger in an impressive manner, which his little family knew was a signal for silence.

The simple toys strewn about the grotto were quietly gathered up and laid aside, and after a whispered recital of some of the choicest Hebrew legends, which the children loved to have repeated again and again, they, too, went to slumberland.

Micaiah and Jochebed, his ever-loyal wife, were left alone. In subdued tones they spoke of the stirring events of the day. Never had they seen so many people in Bethlehem, not even during the feast days of the passover. It was not surprising that the village inn could hold no more guests.

The welcome accorded the two strangers from distant Nazareth was to them a matter of course. For the past twenty-five years this grotto had been a cave of Adullam. Although numbered among earth's poor, a simple shepherd people, they had made many rich, and the path that led to their humble dwelling was beaten hard by many feet. At last they, too, slept, the deep, peaceful sleep of a well-earned rest.

And Zeresh, the gruff, grizzled, and greedy innkeeper, likewise slept. Hidden in the thick folds of his tunic was a leathern bag containing his treasure. Never in so short a time had he received so great riches. Even in his sleep he chuckled over his gain.

While he slept, in the darkness of the night his terrified wife crept silently from the inn, taking her sleeping little girl in her arms, and fled to the home of a cousin living on an adjoining street. There she would snatch a few hours' sleep ere he awoke.

(To be continued next week)

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE "MESSENGER" IN THE HOME CAMPAIGN

REMEMBER CHRISTIAN LITERATURE DAY

January 11, 1920

THE BIG "MESSENGER" WEEK

January 11-18

A MUCH APPRECIATED TESTIMONY

From Mrs. Amelia B. Bausman, of Reading, widow of Rev. Dr. Benjamin Bausman, so greatly revered in the denomination, the editor received a recent letter which is genuinely appreciated. She speaks of how much she is pleased with the great improvement of the "Messenger," and her hope that it may enter every home in our congregations, and adds: "I always eagerly wait for its arrival." The "Messenger" is certainly happy in the friendship of those who have done so much for our beloved Zion.

A PASTOR'S CHALLENGE

Writing in his parish paper, "The Bulletin," of St. Stephen's Church, Lebanon, Pa., about the appointment of a Classical Committee to promote the interests of the "Messenger," Dr. E. F. Wiest, the pastor, says: "Do you receive regularly a Reformed Church paper? What you lose if you do not, is no small matter. Here is a weekly visitor at little cost that will keep you informed as to what your denomination is doing and hopes to do, that gives you the best thought of the best men and women on all phases of Church work and spiritual growth, a report of what the individual congregations are doing, fine clean reading for the children, and a statement of the conditions of our educational and charitable institutions. How can you be a really intelligent and helpful member of the Church if you know next to nothing about your Church? No other paper can take the place of the Church paper."

THE "INNER CIRCLE"

A few weeks ago we made reference to a pastor's statement that he regards the "Messenger" subscribers in his congregation as the "Inner Circle" who can be counted upon in every forward step of the Church life. We are glad to get this added endorsement from Pastor H. H. Rupp, of the First Church, of Steelton, Pa.: "That 'Inner Circle,'" he writes, "is a dependable circle, and would that there were more of them!"

HOW ABOUT THIS FOR ENCOURAGEMENT?

"I have almost completed our canvass." This good word comes from Rev. Dr. I. M. Schaeffer, Ashland, Pa., one of the "Messengers'" most faithful friends.

And here is another from Pen Argyl, Pa., Rev. W. H. Brong, pastor: "Mr. Sharer volunteers to serve as chairman and put Pen Argyl over the top in the 'Messenger' Campaign."

"LEST WE FORGET"

Some of our readers may have overlooked the following significant testimony of one of our most experienced and influential pastors in the recent Book Number of the "Messenger." Lest you forget, we reprint herewith this striking statement from the great article on "Books in the Home," by the Rev. Dr. Charles E. Creitz:

"The Church paper should have a place next to the Bible in every Christian home. Only thus can the Christian be kept from narrowness and provincialism and selfishness. The larger outlook and the wider sympathy come only from a knowledge of the needs and the progress of the Kingdom as a whole."

If our pastors were all convinced of this, do you believe there would be only a few Church papers in the homes of their people?

THE ADVANCE IN THE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE TO \$2.50. WHY?

In last week's issue the statement appeared that the subscription price of the "Messenger" after January 1, 1920, would be raised to \$2.50. Under the prevailing conditions, we cannot believe that this announcement came as a great surprise to our readers. It is altogether likely that many of our more thoughtful subscribers have been wondering why the advance in the subscription price was so long delayed, especially in the light of the financial statement presented to the Synods last fall, which showed a loss of the "Messenger" of \$8,000. Whilst the reason for the increase, under the prevailing high cost of everything may be apparent in a general way, it is altogether fair that we should give, in more or less detail, the main reasons for advancing the price to \$2.50.

The cost of paper, printing, and binding constitute the main items of increased cost in producing periodicals. Those who are unfamiliar with the details of the publishing business will no doubt be surprised to learn how large the item of expense of paper really is. This is largely due to the fact that paper, up to a few years ago, was one of the cheapest commodities, and because of this cheapness it was always underestimated by those who were unfamiliar with the trade.

It may be interesting to our readers to know that newspapers and other periodicals are usually printed on news, machine finish, or supercalendered paper. There was a time when the "Messenger" was printed on supercalendered paper. Then, for economy's sake, the stock was changed to machine finish. When the price began to advance and machine finish cost twice the former price, the management adopted a grade called "half-tone news." This was about three years ago. By making this change we were enabled, for a time, to keep the cost of production within the bounds of reason, and we entertained hopes of escaping the necessity of raising the subscription price; but during the past few months this grade of paper has reached a price never heard of before in the history of newspaper publication. At the time of writing this article, the price of news print is quoted over four times above what it was a few years ago.

The cost of printing and binding has also increased in keeping with the rise in paper, ink, type, etc. These, in brief, con-

stitute the main reasons for raising the subscription price.

The cost of paper and printing is especially hard on religious periodicals. Even in normal times it was a difficult problem to publish a religious weekly of a comparatively small circulation without incurring a loss annually. It is absolutely impossible to do so now; and this being true, the problem confronting the management of the "Messenger" resolved itself to a plain business proposition, namely, shall the Publication and Sunday School Board continue to publish the official organ of the Reformed Church at a loss annually that would soon impair the capital of the business and thereby frustrate the very object for which the Board was constituted, or shall the subscription price be brought nearer to the actual cost of production? We do not believe that the Reformed Church would stand for any impairment of the usefulness of the Board, which through its publications, is an absolute necessity in promoting the interests of the denomination and in advancing the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. The many members of the "Messenger" family certainly do not expect to receive the benefits of the Church paper at so much below cost that the deficit would jeopardize the publication of the Sunday School and other valuable periodicals. At the present subscription price of \$2.00, the "Messenger" costs, with a circulation of 10,000, for each subscription \$2.87. A circulation of 20,000 would bring this cost down to \$2.56, which would still be above the advanced subscription price. In the above calculations there has been no allowance made for overhead, commissions, exchanges, etc.

In presenting this statement to our readers we have in mind not so much an apology for increasing the subscription price as taking our readers into our confidence. For many years the business of the former Publication Board and later of the united Publication and Sunday School Board has carried the "Messenger" deficit, and if it were not for the unprecedented conditions prevailing at the present time, the Board would have been willing to continue to do so.

NOTICE

The Special Religious Literature number of the "Messenger" will be issued December 25th, giving particular attention to the "Messenger in the Home" Campaign.

This number will be used to provide sample copies for the canvassers, the quota being one "Messenger" to every ten families.

Distribution will be made of the first leaflet with reference to the "Messenger in the Home" Campaign, to be used in the pews, on Sunday, December 28th.

HEARTENING ACTION OF READING CLERGY

The following resolution was unanimously adopted at a meeting of Reformed Church pastors of Reading, Pa., on December 8: "We, the pastors of Reading Classis, endorse the Church-wide campaign for the 'Reformed Church Messenger' and pledge ourselves to co-operate in all its details." Needless to say, we are not surprised at such co-operation from these brethren; but we are none the less appre-

ciative of the influence of such an example. In all sections of the Eastern Synods the brethren are "falling in line," recognizing at once how essential this campaign is to the real success of the Forward Movement.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Rev. Henry Gekeler, D. D., from No. 361 Wooster avenue, Akron, Ohio, to No. 2969 West Twenty-fifth street, Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. E. G. Shower, an elder for many years in Christ Church, Baltimore, Md., died suddenly December 10.

Rev. Simon Sipple, of Zion Church, Allentown, Pa., has about 60 members in his Catechetical Class.

Rev. J. G. Rupp preached in St. Paul's Church, Buffalo, N. Y., Dr. Charles Peters, pastor, on December 7.

The American Society of Church History will hold its 13th annual meeting at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, December 29.

Rev. C. D. Kressley, of St. Mark's Church, Allentown, is teaching every Monday evening a class of Catechumens in Grace Church, of that city.

The Every Member Canvass, in charge of Judge George W. Wagner, was conducted in the First Church, Reading, Pa., Dr. John F. Moyer, pastor, on December 7.

Rev. Simon Sipple, of Zion Church, Allentown, addressed the George Caldwell Brotherhood in the Presbyterian Church, Catasauqua, December 11.

The name of Rev. O. H. Dorschel was inadvertently omitted from the list of the Buffalo, N. Y., pastors who participated helpfully in the Forward Movement mass meeting on December 7.

One of the Michigan papers says, "Grant it to be true that the doctors have found a way of adding 15 years to a man's life, could a man really afford it at these prices?"

At the anniversary services of St. John's Sunday School, Reading, Pa., Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach, pastor, the various classes brought in a total of \$954.92 for the Church Building Fund.

The Chinese have interpreted the name of Rev. Dr. Daniel Burghalter to mean "uncle of illustrious virtue," and his vocation as "good will manifest from the beautiful country" (America).

Rajah Theater, Reading, was crowded last Sunday evening at the Forward Movement Rally, at which Dr. C. E. Creitz presided, and the addresses were delivered by Drs. George W. Richards and Charles E. Schaeffer.

ABOUT RHEUMATISM

What Thousands Have Found Gives Relief From This Painful Trouble

Rheumatism is a constitutional disease, manifesting itself in local aches and pains, inflamed joints and stiff muscles. It cannot be cured by local or external applications. It must have constitutional treatment.

Take a course of the great blood-purifying and tonic medicine, Hood's Sarsaparilla, which corrects the acid condition of the blood on which rheumatism depends, and gives permanent relief. This medicine combines, with excellent alteratives and tonics, what is generally conceded to be the most effective agent in the treatment of this disease.

If a cathartic or laxative is needed take Hood's Pills. Purely vegetable.

Rev. W. J. Muir, of Scottdale, spoke at the prayer service in First Church, Sunbury, December 3, and preached at the morning worship December 7. He made many friends in the congregation during his stay.

Grace Church, Jeannette, Pa., Dr. J. M. Runkle, pastor, was the first charge in Westmoreland Classis to pay its Classical apportionment in full for this year. The last payment was made in November. The apportionment was \$1,200.

Zion Church, Terre Haute, Ind., arranged a pleasant surprise to celebrate the 10th wedding anniversary of Rev. and Mrs. Ewald Sommerlatte. After a dainty luncheon and excellent music, a purse containing over \$70 was given to the pastor and wife.

Rev. Leon S. Drumbheller, Selinsgrove, Pa., preached in First Church, Sunbury, Rev. Charles E. Roth, pastor, Sunday evening, December 7, and was the speaker of the evening at the recent Father and Son Banquet. He has many warm friends in Sunbury.

St. John's Church, Allentown, has purchased the beautiful Avon Barnes home-stand, at 452 Walnut street, at a cost of \$16,000, as the parsonage of St. John's Church and for the use of their new pastor, Rev. A. O. Reiter.

On December 7, Rev. Wm. C. Sykes spoke on the Forward Movement in St. John's Church, Saint Clair, Pa., but illness prevented his appointments in the other Churches of the charge. A conference on the Forward Movement will be held in St. John's Church soon.

Zwingli Church, Bern, Minn. (post office, West Concord) is vacant, and desires a pastor who can preach both in English and in German. This is a Swiss congregation located in the country. For particulars, address Rev. A. G. Schmid, Hamburg, Minn.

The Christmas number comes with a gladsome "Merry Christmas" to you all. We trust you will enjoy and profit by its good things. Next week's number will be unique, continuing the Christmas spirit, and bringing some testimonies that have warmed our hearts.

In the First Church, Charlotte, N. C., 16 people were received as a result of a series of meeting at which Rev. H. A. Welker preached and sang. Rev. Shuford Peeler attended the Interechurch World Conference in Raleigh. A heating plant is being installed in the Sunday School room.

In Christ Church, Roaring Spring, Pa., Rev. A. A. Hartman, pastor, the Building Snowball has reached \$1,000. The four Mission Study Classes have a total enrollment of 51. The average Sunday School attendance of November was 142. Rev. A. H. Smith told about the good work in Hoffman Orphanage on December 14.

A special issue of the "Herald" of the First Church, Washington, D. C., Dr. James D. Buhrer, pastor, shows the splendid progress of the year in that congregation. Receipts from all sources were \$56,917.53, and the total indebtedness on the beautiful new edifice has been reduced to about \$18,000.

The missionary episode, "Inasmuch," was well rendered to a large congregation at Bellevue, Ohio, Rev. Edgar V. Loucks, minister, Sunday evening, November 23. The Thank Offering Service which followed made its deep impression also and everyone was happy when it was learned that the offering had been doubled over last year.

A story-song recital was given in Glade Church, Walkersville, Md., Rev. W. R. Hartzell, pastor, December 2, entitled

"Mary, the Doubter's Daughter," under the auspices of the Woman's Bible Class, who furnished the music. Miss Miriam Apple, of Hood College, was the reader. The proceeds will be used as a Christmas gift for Hoffman Orphanage.

Ten new members were received at the last preparatory service in St. Stephen's Church, Lebanon, Pa., Dr. E. F. Wiest, pastor. The Sunday School Christmas Festival will be held Christmas evening at 7. The Sunday School reported an average attendance of 246 in November. It is aimed to make the membership of the school 500 by New Year.

At the 53rd annual banquet of Allentown Chapter, Royal Arch Masons, at the Hotel Traylor, December 8, attended by about 600 members and guests, Rev. Harry Nelson Bassler, of Trinity Church, Wilkinsburg, Pa., spoke eloquently on "Masonry as a Constructive Power in the World." Mr. Owen W. Metzger, of St. Andrew's Church, was in charge of the interesting program.

Zion's Church, Buffalo, New York, Rev. Conrad Hassel, pastor, will have a German service at 10 A. M. on Christmas Day, and the annual celebration by the Sunday School in the evening. Watch-night service will be observed on New Year's Eve, and worship will be held in the sanctuary on New Year's morning at 10 o'clock.

Saint Clair, Pa., gave a Welcome Home to her boys on Thanksgiving Day. A feature of the occasion was the union worship of the Protestant Churches, held in the M. E. Church. Rev. E. F. Faust, of St. John's Reformed Church, preached the sermon on "The Call to Gratitude." This worship was held at 8.30 A. M., while the Roman Catholic Churches at the same hour observed Thanksgiving Mass.

"Trinity News" is the name of a new monthly, published by Friendship Bible Class and the Deo Duce Club in the interest of Trinity Church, Wilkinsburg, Pa., Rev. Harry Nelson Bassler, pastor. H. L. Logsdon, Geraldine Wagner, and Arthur Arnold are editors, and Roy E. Adams and Sue A. Bowling, managers. It promises to be full of parish news served in interesting style.

The evenings of December 3 and 4 were the occasion of great joy for the members of St. Paul's Church, Ridgely, Md., Rev. John M. Herzog, pastor, when \$225 was realized through a chicken and waffle supper, an annual event which this year reached the high water mark. This money is used for the benefit of the Church to pay the debt for the recent painting of the Church and parsonage.

St. John's Sunday School, Saint Clair, Pa., Rev. E. F. Faust, pastor, has taken on new life during the months following Rally Day. The attendance is one-third more than the average of the past two years. A few weeks ago 90% of the members were present. The "Lincoln Highway contest" is helping to create a good spirit. By the will of Mr. Wm. H. Lachman, for many years a faithful member of St. John's, the congregation received a gift of \$50 to provide a suitable memorial in the new Church, which it is planned soon to build.

In St. John's Church, Lansdale, Rev. Jacob Rothrock, pastor, a committee of women recently gathered the Mite Boxes which, to the surprise of the members, totaled the fine sum of \$140, which is another proof of the value of conserving

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small amounts and an example of the effectiveness of earnest women workers in the Church. About 190 boxes have been distributed for 1920, with the plea that every recipient deposit at least 1 cent every day. In this simple manner, over \$700 could be raised, which might be used very effectively in Kingdom work.

At the Eastern Pennsylvania Training Conference of the Interchurch World Movement, held in Chambers-Wylie Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, December 10-12, there were 300 registered delegates from 37 counties, representing 23 denominations. The Reformed Church had 60 delegates, about the largest number from any Church, and a number of our distinguished leaders contributed to the strength of the program. It was another indication of how our Church is lining up for every phase of Forward Movement work. Our pastors mean to be "among those present" in the big campaign.

St. John's Sunday School, Lansdale, Pa., under the active superintendency of A. Wesley Kratz, has taken a new step in the study of Missions. It is going to approach this work and study by individual, definite, concrete methods. A society known as the Correspondence Missionary Society has been organized in the school, to which all the members belong, and through which an intensive program of correspondence will be inaugurated between the members of the Lansdale School and various individual missionaries, helpers, or new converts on the home or foreign field. Miss Minnie Schultz is President and Miss Margaret Morgan Secretary.

In the Plainfield Charge, Rev. W. H. Brong, pastor, the playlet "Abraham and Matilda's First Thanksgiving," was rendered November 30 by the W. M. S. of Faith Church, Pen Argyl, Pa. Mrs. W. U. Helffrich, of Bath, gave an interesting address. On December 6 a Baby Grand piano, recently purchased by St. Peter's Sunday School, of Plainfield Township, was dedicated and a musical program rendered to a large audience. The pastor's daughter, Miss Clara Cordelia Brong, a Senior in High School, rendered vocal and instrumental selections. Electric lights are being installed in the Belfast Church. All the Churches in the charge are now equipped with electric lights.

Rev. L. A. Peeler took charge of the new Kannapolis, N. C., Mission October 1. The first Communion was held on December 7, when 41 communed. Eight people were received into the fellowship of the mission. The pastor presented the Fellowship of Stewardship and about 50% of the membership enrolled as tithers. The pastor was installed that evening. Rev. W. C. Lyerly was in charge of the service and Rev. J. H. Keller preached the sermon. St. Paul's congregation has been placed with this mission. They hope to start a building fund, so that they can begin building in the spring.

Writing about her kindergarten in the Japanese Mission in San Francisco, Miss Alma Hassel says in "Zion's Herald": "I believe I have the most interesting kindergarten in the United States, about 40 children, all Japanese but 2 Chinese girls. Only about one-fourth are boys. They range from 2½ to 5½ years and respond quickly to kindness and sympathy, but need quite a bit of disciplining. The older ones understand English quite well and the younger ones are fine imitators. I love every one of them and am sure you would, too, if you could see them. The Japanese people in our Church are fine Christian men and women, kindly, hospitable, and appreciative."

In view of the imperative need for rallying all the available forces for conserving

the moral and spiritual life of our nation, January 25th, 1920, has been designated by the American Tract Society as Christian Literature Sunday, and Churches, Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies and other Christian organizations of America are urged to observe this day with appropriate services, in order that the function and power of Christian literature as an Americanizing and world-evangelizing force shall receive its proper recognition. In our own Church, by arrangement of the Forward Movement, this Sunday will be observed January 11.

December 7 was a great day for Richmond Church, Fort Loudon Charge, Rev. G. Teske, pastor. At the Jubilee Service two great Church leaders spoke, Dr. Wm. Mann Irvine, of Mercersburg Academy, and Dr. Charles L. Erdman, of Princeton Seminary. Elder John A. Diehl, of Marion, a dear friend of the pastor and congregation, also spoke a few words of congratulation. The choir of St. Peter's furnished music. Elder John McConnell and wife entertained the distinguished speakers and a few friends. A similar service will be held December 28 at Fannetsburg. The Forward Movement is not neglected in this charge.

The American Civic Reform Union of Cleveland, Ohio, Rev. Albert Sidney Gregg, superintendent, is conducting an active campaign to suppress vice, safeguard girls, and promote better civic and moral conditions. They have furnished evidence in one county alone in Pennsylvania that led to over 100 convictions and in one Ohio city the Union obtained 125 indictments. Nearly 500 Welfare Circle workers are doing personal work among girls and women, and within the last year gave direct warnings and teaching to 20,000 people, relative to vice and white slavery. The Union is calling for 10,000 women to volunteer as Welfare leaders to circulate books, and to co-operate in other ways.

The Every Member Canvass was held at Bethany Church, Butler, Pa., Rev. J. W. Pontius, pastor, on November 23, and the budget for the ensuing year was covered. The W. M. S. held its Thank Offering service on November 16 and the offering was \$58. Home Missionary Day was observed on December 14. A Mission Band was organized a few months ago. Dr. James I. Good will be present on the evening of December 21 to present the condition of the Churches in France and Belgium. Bethany Church is well organized for the Forward Movement. She is ready for "Messenger" Day and is awaiting the announcement of the amount that she is to contribute in the Movement. On January 18 Dr. C. E. Schaeffer, General Secretary of the Home Board, will present its claims.

This has been a busy fall in Fort Loudon Charge, Rev. G. Teske, pastor. Holy Communion, Rally Day, Harvest Home, and Home Mission Sunday have all been observed with good results. Father and Son Day was also observed on November 16, followed on the 18th by a banquet, when the pastor spoke to 28 men and boys on "Ringing the Joy Bells of Life." The occasion was so enjoyed that it was decided to hold them quarterly. The Ladies' Guild Society, Mrs. Teske president, held their annual chicken-waffle supper and bazaar on November 29, clearing \$110. This congregation cleared an old debt of \$1,500, made many improvements in the Churches of the charge, raised the salary of the pastor \$300 (the second increase in less than 3 years), added 60 members, and is now planning to make an Every Family Canvass on January 11, 1920, for the great "Messenger" drive.

St. Vincent Church, near Spring City, Pa., Rev. Carl G. Petri, pastor, was re-

opened for services on December 7 after being closed for three Sundays during November on account of urgent repairs and improvements. During the interval, the congregation held services one Sunday at the parsonage and the other two Sundays it worshipped, by invitation, with the East Vincent congregation. A new roof was put on St. Vincent Church and the interior was repainted. The wall behind the pulpit was embellished with a reproduction, in colors, of Hoffman's "Christ in Gethsemane." These improvements amounted to \$1,900, and over half the amount was raised by the congregation December 7, which was especially small owing to the inclemency of the weather. A special service was held in the evening. The members of East Vincent Church joined in the service and their pastor, Rev. John M. Evans, spoke words of felicitation to the members of St. Vincent Church.

Many members of Grace Church, Washington, D. C., Dr. Henry H. Ranck, pastor, have been studying "Money, the Acid Test." Elder W. F. Johnson has been teaching the book to several Sunday School classes. The Home Department in Grace Church has 108 members. Superintendent A. H. Smith, of Hoffman Orphanage, recently preached to the congregation, and gave a vivid story of his work. "Climbing the Ladder of Life" is the theme of the helpful series of Sunday evening sermons by Dr. Ranck, on the patriarch Jacob. When Grace Church was erected in 1902, the name of the donor of the beautiful sanctuary window next to the parsonage, "Easter Morning," was withheld at his request. President Roosevelt was then attending the worship in Grace Church, and it was the time of the great anthracite coal strike, when the President of the Reading Railroad Co., the late Hon. George F. Baer, was the spokesman for the mine operators. Recently the pastor of Grace Church obtained the consent of the surviving daughters of the donor to place on this window the simple inscription, "The Gift of George F. Baer."

The Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society and the Ladies' Auxiliary of St. Mark's Church, Reading, Rev. Gustav R. Poetter, united in celebrating their 28th anniversaries on December 10. The pastor conducted the special service and was assisted by Miss Elsie Herbein, who sang a fine soprano solo, accompanied by Estelle K. Kriek on the piano, and by Mrs. J. Pierce Sands, who gave a very appropriate reading. Miss Kathryn Auman read the report of the Missionary Society, in which appeared an account of a successful year's activities as well as the amount of the receipts, totaling \$314.04. Mrs. W. M. Leinbach is the President. Mrs. Morris J. Ulrich read the report of the Ladies' Auxiliary, which within the last year was organized by the pastor on a modern basis, with a constitution and by-laws. It was a most successful year for the Auxiliary, the amount of money having been raised reaching to \$2,965.44, most of which has been turned over to the work of the congregation in helping to pay the debt. Mrs. Gustav R. Poetter is the President. The address of the evening was delivered by the Rev. H. Y. Stoner, who spoke on "Ominous but Propitious Times." Rev. Mr. Stoner, who was the first pastor

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and the founder of these organizations, which have done so much good spiritually and financially these many years, was given a cordial reception by all present, especially by those who were members under his successful pastorate. These members are still among the "faithful few" in this large congregation which is surely a fine tribute both to them and their first pastor. Not many pastors have the rare privilege that Brother Stoner enjoys, as he comes back to his "first love," cordially received by his former parishioners and seeing the continued progress of the work which he founded 28 years ago.

On December 8, the Men's League of Grace Church, Hazleton, Rev. William Toennes, pastor, held a "red letter" meeting in the Sunday School room. In spite of the very inclement weather, there were present about 80 men, to the agreeable surprise of the genial pastor and interested President of the League. Mr. Conrad Schott, the President, presided and Walter Kirschner recorded the minutes. Six new members were received. A donation of \$10 was voted unanimously for the local hospital, and ushers for the month for the Church services were appointed. A fine spirit on the part of the men expressed itself in their willingness to support the interests of the congregation, under the efficient and successful leadership of their pastor, who has spent 22 years of his ministry with them. During these years, under his tactful direction, a splendid Church and parsonage property, at a cost of \$50,000, has been built, on one of the main streets of Hazleton. Only \$1,500 of this cost remains to be paid. In April, 1920, when the congregation will celebrate its 73rd anniversary, this debt will be wiped out and the mortgage will be burned. Today the value of the Church property has doubled itself. There are 1,000 members, as over against 384 when the pastor began his ministry with these interesting people, and the Sunday School numbers 500. Rev. S. E. Stofflett, of the English Reformed Church, was a guest of the League, and, when called on, congratulated the League on its successful career and great usefulness to the congregation and the community. Rev. G. R. Poetter, of Reading, a friend of the pastor for many years, was invited to deliver the principal address. He spoke on "Here or Hereafter," and was given a most cordial reception and hearing. It was a real pleasure and privilege for him to enjoy the hospitality of the League as well as of the pastor and his family in their comfortable home. After the address, a fine luncheon and genial fellowship was enjoyed by all.

In Trinity Church, Saxton, Pa., Rev. George A. Bear, pastor, these are busy days of abundant blessing. On November 23, 3 members were received by confirmation and 5 by re-profession. This makes a total of 13 new members so far this year. On December 3 the Mission Study Contest was closed. Average attendance during two months was 23 in the ladies' class, 22 in the men's class, 16 in the boys' and girls' class. This, with the catechetical class, made an average attendance of 72 at prayer meeting and Mission Study during October and November. Rev. E. A. Beck helped the missionary spirit by his presence and excellent address. Numerous questions were answered by Rev. Mr. Beck and a social hour followed.

Dr. Joseph L. Lemberger, of Lebanon, Pa., one of our well-known and most useful Churchmen, is reported to have ob-

served another birthday anniversary on December 7. The doctor is keeping so young that we thought he was forgetting all about his birthday.

Rev. Thomas H. Krick has a class of 43 catechumens at Coplay, Pa.

The choir of St. James Church, Allentown, Rev. J. S. Peters, pastor, held an enjoyable social on the 12th in the Church.

Dr. Stanley L. Krebs, of New York, spoke in the Pottstown, Pa., Opera House last Sunday on "Three Gods or One."

Mrs. Thomas S. Land, of Manchester, Md., is spending the winter with her son, Prof. George Land, in New York.

The Forward Movement Commission meets in Assembly Hall, Philadelphia, Friday, December 19.

Grace Church, Northampton, Pa., Rev. John Baer Stoudt, pastor, has decided to purchase a pipe organ.

Don't forget that Santa Claus is the central figure on the little Christmas Seal which carries health and good cheer to many thousands.

Dr. J. M. G. Darms, of Allentown, gave the principal address at the reunion of the employees and friends of L. F. Grammes & Sons, at which 1,100 were present.

The 111 boys and girls of Fort Wayne Orphans' Home extend Christmas greetings and wish all the fullest measure of Christmas joy and happiness.

Rev. H. Y. Stoner, of Reading, gave an inspirational address before the Parent-Teacher Association in Birdsboro, Pa., December 14.

Rev. H. L. V. Shinn, of Germantown, Ohio, has received a unanimous call to the pastorate of St. Paul's Church, Kansas City, Mo., to succeed Rev. E. N. Evans.

Rev. Dr. Carl H. Gramm, of Zion's Church, Reading, gave an illustrated lecture on "The Care of Trees," before the recently formed Educational Club of the congregation.

Rev. H. Jerome Leinbach, of Wichita, Kan., is very much concerned over the condition of his father, H. J. Leinbach, Oley, Pa., who suffered a second stroke of paralysis.

Grace Church, Chicago, Ill., Rev. M. E. Beck, pastor, will hold a congregational dinner in connection with its annual meeting January 5. A "White Christmas" will be celebrated December 21.

Rev. Roy J. Freeman has tendered his resignation of the pastorate of the First Church, East Mauch Chunk, Pa., to take effect January 1, as he has accepted the call to Manchester, Md.

The men of St. John's Church, Allentown, gave a reception December 12 at the Allentown College for Women to their new pastor, Rev. A. O. Reiter. They were guests of Rev. Dr. Curtis.

Rev. Dr. and Mrs. S. L. Messinger, of St. Luke's Church, Trappe, Pa., have announced the engagement of their daughter, Nellie A., to Mr. Wm. B. Ashenfelter, of Jeffersonville.

One of the interesting Church directories received in this office is that of St. Peter's Church, Easton, Pa., Rev. Wm. H. Mader, pastor, which is full of good things concerning the activities of that congregation.

Grace Church, Allentown, Pa., has unanimously elected Rev. J. R. Rothermel, of Quakertown, pastor of the Trumbauersville Charge, to its pastorate, to succeed Rev. F. H. Moyer, now Superintendent of Phoebe Deaconess and Old Folks' Home.

Many "Messenger" readers have kindly memories of Rev. Dr. Aaron E. Ballard, president and one of the founders of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association,

who recently died at his home in Ocean Grove, N. J., at the age of 98. He was one of the most widely known Methodists in America, and his many ministries of kindness and good will are widely known.

Nearly the entire membership of the various departments of Trinity Sunday School, Altoona, remained for morning worship November 23, when Young People's Day was observed. The Church was full and the pastor, Rev. W. F. Kosman, preached a special sermon to the children and young people, entitled "Let Us Run the Race."

Rev. Dallas R. Krebs observed the 5th anniversary of his pastorate in First Church, Spring City, Pa., with special services last Sunday. Over \$32,000 has been raised for Church purposes, of which \$9,000 was for benevolence. The 517 services conducted during these five years had a total attendance of 122,718.

"The Building of America" is the theme of an Americanization pageant, written by Rev. Dr. Carl H. Gramm, and rendered on December 11 in Zion's Church, Reading, by a caste of 45 persons. It is in three acts and a finale. The detailed program reveals an arrangement full of interest and profit. The use of such pageants should be greatly extended.

The consistory of First Church, Easton, Pa., has granted a six months' leave of absence to their pastor, Rev. Edward F. Evemeyer. Together with Mrs. Evemeyer, he purposes to attend the World Sunday School Convention in Tokyo, Japan, next spring, and they will doubtless take in most of the points of interest going and coming. A host of friends will follow them with great interest on this eventful trip.

An interesting visitor to the "Messenger" office was Rev. Emil Brunner, from Zurich, Switzerland, who has been appointed for the fellowship granted to a Swiss scholar by the Union Theological Seminary in New York. Because of the close relationship between our people and Swiss Protestantism, our people will be glad to come into touch with this fine representative of the Reformed Church of Switzerland.

Taking time by the forelock, the Ridgeview Missionary Conference Club has been

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organized for the year in Trinity Church, Altoona, Pa., Rev. W. F. Kosman, pastor, under the leadership of Dr. George D. Robb, its purpose being to raise funds to send a delegation to the next conference at Ridgeview. The club was highly successful last year, 14 delegates attending from Trinity. The apportionment of Trinity congregation, \$1,256, was paid in full December 1.

Rev. J. J. Schaeffer, Ph. D., celebrated last Sunday the 7th anniversary of his ministry in Trinity Church, Allentown. During this successful pastorate the debt has been reduced from over \$15,000 to about \$3,000, a repair fund of over \$3,000 paid, and the elimination of the debt pledged for 1920. The day was marked by a large attendance and a splendid degree of interest. The pastor preached in the morning and Dr. Paul S. Leinbach, of Philadelphia, in the evening. New features are being arranged for the annual Watch-night services December 31.

Rev. C. G. Bachman, of New Holland, Pa., in sending a renewal of a subscription to Mrs. Mary Sutton, of that town, is kind enough to add these interesting lines: "Mrs. Sutton is 90 years of age and the oldest member of the Reformed congregation of New Holland. She says the 'Messenger' has been coming into her home as far back as she can remember, and declares 'it is better now than ever,' and she anxiously looks forward to its coming each week. Her pastor can testify that Mrs. Sutton not merely subscribes to the 'Messenger,' but also reads it carefully and rejoices in the news of her Church which it brings to her."

Rev. A. H. Smith, of Hoffman Orphanage, preached at Trinity Church, Saxton, Pa., November 30, and his appeal reached the hearts of the people. A committee was appointed to bring the Orphanage need before every individual member, and the Christmas offering will be an evidence of healthy interest. An evangelistic campaign for new members is being conducted December 7 to 21, by Rev. B. F. Campbell. Unusual interest has been displayed. There was an average attendance of 225 the first week. The spirit of the Forward Movement is felt in the Church and is leading into wider circles of activity and more consecrated service and Christ, as Pastor Bear reports.

The commencement exercises of the Teacher Training Class of 1919, of St. Paul's Union Sunday School in Fleetwood, Pa., took place last Sunday evening in the Fleetwood Chapel. It was the first class graduated from the Churches represented and numbered 12 members. There were 400 present, and the interesting program included six papers by members of the class and a splendid address by the pastor, Rev. J. B. Landis. A purse was given to the pastor by the class. The officers of the class are Elmer M. Hoch, president; Edith W. Schlegel, vice-president; Florence Kutz, secretary and treasurer; Helen M. Adam, historian; Miss Cora Schaeffer, pianist, and Rev. J. B. Landis, teacher.

Impressive services marked the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the dedication of St. John's Church, Shamokin, Pa., Rev. C. B. Schneder, D. D., pastor, on December 14. The principal speakers were Dr. T. J. Hacker, of Wyomissing, Pa., who was Dr. Schneder's immediate predecessor, serving from 1879 to 1890, and Rev. L. E. Bair, of Millersburg, Pa., the former assistant pastor of St. John's. Rev. J. S. Heffner, of Salem Church, Shamokin, and Rev. Joseph Yost also participated in the worship. The Sunday School attendance was 1,010. All the services of the day were largely attended and inspirational. H. Wilson Lark, of St. John's Consistory, made an interesting historical statement of the congregation's life and work.

Sunday, November 30, will long be remembered by the members and friends of St. Peter's Church, Tremont, Pa., who were present at the evening worship. At that time the debt resting upon the congregation was cancelled and the mortgage burned. The present beautiful edifice was dedicated April 23, 1911, having cost \$20,000. One of the largest audiences that ever assembled in the Church, filling both Church and Sunday School room to overflowing, greeted the speakers, Rev. George W. Spotts, under whose pastorate the new Church was built, and Rev. Titus C. Strock, during whose pastorate a fund was started for a new Church. Both addresses were most timely and were listened to with rapt attention. At a given signal three of the little girls of the Church, Marie Reedy, Elizabeth Kalb, and Verna Koehler, dressed in robes of white, and each bearing a lighted candle, marched down three aisles of the Church to the chancel rail, where

they were met by Rev. Mr. Strock, Rev. Mr. Spotts and the pastor, Rev. Charles A. Huyette, each of whom held in his hand a part of the mortgage. At this point Elder H. W. Hibshman, the only remaining member of the original Reformed organization in Tremont, came forward bearing a silver plate on which each minister burned his part of the mortgage. As the flames were dying out the audience arose and sang, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Elder D. H. Barnhill then came forward and in well chosen remarks informed each minister that the candle with which he burned his part of the mortgage was his as a memento of the occasion. Each little candle-bearer recited an appropriate verse of Scripture, presenting her candle, as she did so, to the minister designated. It was truly a great service, and with the decks cleared for action, pastor and people are ready for the Forward Movement.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

GENERAL COMMENT

The Reindeer of Alaska—A most interesting article in the December number of the "National Geographic Magazine" tells of the reindeer industry in Alaska and gives many interesting facts concerning those animals.

In 1893 some thoughtful officials of the Government suggested the idea of stocking Northern Alaska with reindeer. Straightway 162 were brought from Norway and later about a thousand from Siberia. From this small beginning in the course of 27 years the reindeer of Alaska now number 160,000, and at least 100,000 have in the meantime been killed for food.

The reindeer is the cheapest of all animals in the matter of their subsistence. In fact they need not be fed at all. They live entirely upon moss which grows wild and which in winter they get by digging into the snow, not with their antlers, as is commonly supposed, but with hoofs and nose. The reindeer have an instinct which tells them precisely where to find the necessary food, however deep the snow may be. There are about 200,000 square miles of this moss growth in Alaska (five times the size of Ohio), and this great tract is capable of supporting ten million reindeer. They are kept in herds of several thousand in a herd and they are very easy to take care of. On the coming of a great blizzard the herder secures shelter wherever he can find it and leaves his flock. He always knows where to find it because he knows the habit of the reindeer. In a storm these animals always move against the wind, and when the storm has passed the keeper knows almost exactly where to find his herd.

The uses of the reindeer are almost endless. The flesh is quite as good as beef or mutton. The hides are used for making clothing or gloves. The reindeer is coming to be used to draw sledges and as beasts of burden generally. They can make 30 miles a day over the snow, are as easy to handle as the dog and are far cheaper because they get their own food. No Alaskan traveler with reindeer needs to take food along for them. It is believed that the raising of reindeer will become the greatest industry of that great northern country, exceeding even its output of gold and coal. The reindeer is rightly called "the camel of frozen deserts."

The Coal Strike—After five weeks the miners' strike has come to an end, the

men having decided to go back to work on the special request of President Wilson and the promise that he will immediately appoint a commission that will inquire into the coal situation and determine whether the miners are entitled to a larger increase in wages. The increase already granted them is 14%, suggested by the Fuel Administrator, Garfield. The settling of the strike through the intervention of the President reminds us of the great anthracite strike in 1902, when President Roosevelt became the mediator and succeeded in bringing about terms between the strikers and operators. President Wilson has won quite as great honor in the present instance as President Roosevelt won at that time.

The coal strike was most unfortunate, and came at a time of the year when it would produce the most suffering. This we believe was due to the agitators rather than to the strikers themselves because in all such strikes no one suffers more than the strikers. It is hoped that a Federal law may be passed creating at National Court which may settle all such disputes between labor and capital, in the hope that such a law will bring about conditions that will prevent strikes in future.

NEWS ITEMS

A bill has just passed both Houses providing all classes of mail shall be returned without additional postage. At present only first-class or letter mail can be returned free to the sender if not delivered.

The Supreme Court December 8th failed to hand down its decision on the constitutionality of war time prohibition.

The cost of the war in money as placed by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is \$338,000,000,000.

The house on Prince street, New York City, where President Monroe spent the last years of his life, has been sold. Patriotic societies sought to save it for its historical association, but their efforts failed to materialize.

Mrs. Clara K. Angeles, widow of General Felipe Angeles, executed by a firing squad in Chihuahua last month for alleged complicity in a revolutionary plot against the Carranza government, died at her home in New York, ignorant of her husband's death.

A new high level was reached in New York for fresh eggs when wholesalers asked \$1.20 per dozen.

Recommendations of the Navy General Board for the building program for 1921 include two battleships, one battle cruiser, 10 scout cruisers, five destroyer "flotilla leaders," and six submarines.

The cost of living, as based on 96 staple commodities advanced 1.3 per cent. during the last month, and now stands at 131% above the pre-war level, or the highest ever known, according to figures made public by Bradstreets. Textile provisions and groceries constitute the bulk of the commodities.

More than \$3,000,000 worth of silk was stolen in New York during 1919, according to the statement issued by the Silk Association of America.

A Soviet Government is to be established

in the State of Yucatan, Mexico, according to "Excelsior," of Mexico City, December 13th, a copy of which was received in Washington.

Without a record vote, the House, December 9th, passed the Fordney bill designed to prevent foreign manufacturers from flooding American markets with products sold at a lower price in the United States than in the country of manufacture.

Republican Senate and House leaders agreed tentatively for a recess of Congress for two weeks from December 20th to January 5th.

The American Peace Mission sailed for home December 10th. French officials and a big crowd at Paris station saw them off.

YOU

went to buy a new suit of clothes recently and were charged fully 150% above what you paid a couple of years ago—yet you bought the suit, didn't you?

YOU

needed a new pair of shoes. It hurt when you had to pay \$12 for what you had been purchasing for \$4—but you bought the shoes, didn't you?

YOU

would not think a thing was worth purchasing unless you were asked double what you paid just a short time ago, would you?

YOU

were not the fellow who stood up in the Sunday School recently and denounced the publisher for adding a measly 16% to the cost of his books when his binding bills alone have doubled and in some cases trebled, were you? And was it you who advised depriving your school of what it needed as badly as you did a new suit, until prices came down?

YOU

didn't accept as necessary the advance in necessities, amusements, etc., then refuse to increase that insignificant amount you have been giving toward the advancement of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, did you?

YOU

can help things wonderfully if you will use your "gray matter" and then advise advancement—not retrenchment.

Music Department

Publication and Sunday School Board of the Reformed Church

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Business is fine, thank you!

AFTER THE GRIP

Which leaves the digestion and appetite impaired, the mucous membrane sensitive and inflamed, and the susceptibility to disease greatly increased, a course of blood-purifying, health-restoring medicine should be taken.

Hood's Sarsaparilla and Pills come right in here with wonderful efficacy, as in many other states—they are invaluable for recovering and building up the whole system.

They make convalescence from the grip, diphtheria, scarlet fever, pneumonia, and all blood-poisoning, prostrating and debilitating sicknesses, real, rapid and perfect.

David Stephenson, West Kendall, N. Y., says: "After the grip, Hood's Sarsaparilla helped me wonderfully. It gave me strength and took away that tired feeling."

Accept no substitutes for Hood's Sarsaparilla and Pills, for no substitutes act like them.

News of the Woman's Missionary Society

[Send Communications to Mrs. Harvey J. Troxell, 222½ N. 13th St., Allentown, Pa.]

Missionary Institutes—The Institute of the W. M. S. of Allegheny Classis, held in Grace Church, Pittsburgh, November 13, was most helpful and inspiring. Mrs. W. R. Harris conducted a Round Table. Mrs. S. O. Reiter presented "Literature" and gave an address. She also read a Thank Offering poem. A splendid luncheon, at which two-minute speeches were given by the local presidents, was served by the ladies of the W. M. S. of Grace Church. Dr. Curtis, President of the Allentown College for Women, gave a short address. The cards used in the campaign were deposited in a large loving cup made from literature and decorated with the W. M. S. colors. Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. L. L. Anewalt, Mrs. Keiser, Miss Hess and Miss Grim, of Allentown, visited the Institute. Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. Anewalt and Miss Grim gave short talks concerning their missionary work. Mrs. Harry N. Bassler addressed the Institute on "Stewardship." Mrs. Harris gave the closing address on "Achievements and Aims." Mrs. Rosa Arnold conducted the closing consecration service.

The Missionary Institute held in Woodstock, Va., November 18th, was a fitting close to the Forward Movement Campaign recently conducted throughout the Classis in the interest of the W. M. S. There was a large number of women present. All officers except one, and all but one departmental secretary were in attendance. They came from Martinsburg, W. Va., to Roanoke, Va., 150 strong, and a very enthusiastic conference was held. Never was there such a gathering of the women of Virginia Classis, never such enthusiasm, optimism and interest displayed. On every hand one could hear this exclamation, "It was a wonderful meeting!"

Mrs. W. R. Harris, the General Synodical President, and Miss Carrie Kerschner, Executive Secretary, were present and added much toward the success of the day. Mrs. Harris held everyone spellbound during her very excellent inspirational address, and impressed all with the importance of missionary activity at this critical time.

The results of the campaign as to numbers were: 120 new members enrolled, the organization of one new society, one life member and one member in memoriam received and a number of new subscriptions to the "Outlook of Missions." There remains but a small number of congregations in Virginia Classis where there is no organization, and before the Classical year closes we expect to make this number smaller.

The Round Table discussion and presentation of Literature were conducted by Miss Kerschner and was both helpful and highly instructive. Just as the sun was sinking over the beautiful western mountains, Miss Kerschner led a most impressive and deeply spiritual consecration service which closed the Institute, after which the women joined the men in their conference that was held at the same time in the main auditorium of the Church, where Miss Chambers, of the faculty of Massanutten Academy, favored the audience with a beautiful solo, and Mrs. Harris gave the closing message of the day. These were red letter days in Virginia Classis.

The Lebanon Classical Institute was held in the chapel of the First Church, Lebanon, Pa., on December 8, 2 P. M. Weather conditions were all against a large attendance, there being a downpour of rain all afternoon. With it all there were 5 presidents of local societies, 5 officers and 50 additional members present. Mrs. Livingston, the president of the Classical Society, presided. The speaker of the afternoon was Mrs. W. R. Harris, president of the W. M. S. G. S. Her messages undoubtedly made a deep impression on all present. We feel that all have decided to do larger things for the Kingdom. Our Classical Society will do its best.

The W. M. S. of Lehigh Classis held a very largely attended and successful Institute, with morning and afternoon sessions in St. Andrew's Church, Allentown, Pa., on December 4. This Institute marked the close of the Forward Movement Campaign. Great enthusiasm and spirit was manifested. The reports from the different societies showed 2,774 visits made, 101 new members gained, 644 Service Cards signed, 73 new subscribers to the "Outlook of Missions" and Thank Offering amounting to \$506.83. This report and figures would have been greatly increased but the necessary literature not being on hand, the work was somewhat delayed. The final reports will be completed during the winter. It was a grand success for the work of the Forward Movement.

Thank Offering Services—On Wednesday evening, November 19th, the Missionary Society of St. Luke's Church, Lock Haven, Pa., held its annual Thank Offering service. An appreciative audience of more than average attendance heard an address on "Citizenship" by Miss Irene Buchanan, President of the Normal School Y. W. C.

A.; a solo by Mr. Harry Hubler, and a quartette by members of the Men's Chorus. Mr. Claude Miller and Mrs. Eadie had charge of the music. The beautiful Thank Offering service arranged by Mrs. A. K. Zartman followed the regular first part of the program and created a genuine atmosphere of thanksgiving. The Thank Offering that evening was \$32, but when the ingathering as planned by the Thank Offering Secretary, Mrs. A. A. Oberheim, was finally finished, it amounted to \$60. Our aim to double our Thank Offering of last year was fully accomplished. The membership campaign will receive emphasis for the remainder of the year until each member of the Church is challenged to help us in our work for others.

St. John's, Tamaqua, of Schuylkill Classis, held their Thank Offering service on November 30. The large congregation expressed its appreciation of the beautiful and touching altar service. This is not the largest of the Classical Societies, but the Thank Offering was \$123.60.

The Thank Offering service of the W. M. S. of Heidelberg Church, Philadelphia, held on Wednesday evening, November 26, was a success, although the weather was stormy and kept some people from attending. The exercises were in charge of Mrs. F. C. Brunhouse, president of the society, and Mrs. Grace McAllister, Thank Offering Secretary. The exercise "Motives" was given by seven young women, who took their parts well, and it was enjoyed by all present. The pastor, Dr. Zartman, gave a talk on "Give and Thank." The Thank Offering amounted to \$85.

BETHANY ORPHANS' HOME

Rev. W. F. More, D. D., Superintendent

A Trip to Paradise

Who would not wish to take such a trip? It was planned for a year ago, but then the influenza epidemic came, and it had to be postponed. This fall there was another invitation. Once more it seemed to be otherwise decreed. Three preceding Sunday appointments had to be cancelled by order of the physician, and there is no telling what might have happened this time if the doctor had been at home when I went to get permission to go. The urge of Paradise was upon me and so I went.

Poor train service and rain and snow and slush all were against me, but a cordial welcome at the Harrisburg station by a former Bethany girl and a few hours' stay in her home proved to be a foretaste of the good things to come. It was almost ten o'clock on Saturday evening when I reached Milton, and I was glad for the shelter of the parsonage and a comfortable bed.

Sunday morning at ten o'clock a friendly doctor put me into shape to speak for Bethany in St. John's Church, Milton, where I found an attentive audience, and after the service a gentleman presented himself and asked for the privilege of becoming the "Bethany Shoestring Man," the rest of his life, and as an earnest indication of his sincerity placed a ten-dollar bill into my hands. I was on the way to Paradise.

After a good dinner at the parsonage, some friends arrived with an auto, but before I left Milton I had the promise of service as assistant matron in Santee Hall if needed later on, and then, surely, I was on the way to Paradise.

The way was neither straight nor nar-

row, but hilly, and there was such constant danger of skidding that I was very thankful to have a sensible and steady preacher for a driver. He knew the way and he understood his machine, and he recognized the danger, and he was determined to get his passengers safely to Paradise.

I could well imagine the beauty of the country we passed through, even though at this season the fields were not "arrayed in living green." At the end of our journey we found a beautiful country Church and a congregation that had already paid in full its apportionment for the current year. It is worthy of the ministers who served it in the past and of its present pastor. Some more good news for Bethany made me appreciate the fact that I was in Paradise.

HOFFMAN ORPHANAGE, LITTLES-TOWN, PA.

Rev. Andrew H. Smith, Superintendent

We have not forgotten the readers of the "Messenger," but because of a multiplicity of duties, being the only man on the place and on the go most of the time in the interests of a greater Hoffman Orphanage, we failed to write for the Church paper for some time. We still have no utility man and his wife, hence the water plant, the electric light and laundry are extra jobs. Frequently the superintendent is absent from Saturday morning until Monday morning.

Today (December 10) the first Christmas boxes arrived, making their journey east from Basil, Ohio, and if this, the "first fruits," is an indication of what is in store for us the children will be well provided for with many useful and comfort-producing articles.

We have been busy unpacking a lot of fine-looking fruit for several weeks. Now our shelves are well filled to meet the demands of a very much enlarged family in the coming months, but our greatest concern for the maintenance of our growing family is the size of your Christmas offering, for which we sent to the pastors many thousands of envelopes, upon which is printed the picture of three of the five children that were admitted in 1919. The regular Christmas letter to the pastors was also sent, but in many cases the people will not hear the letter read, hence we enclose a copy of it, which is as follows:—
Dear Friends:—

Instead of asking for your support on fifty-two different days in the year, the orphans appeal for their maintenance but once. Synods and Classes have designated that on CHRISTMAS the offerings necessary for the maintenance of the orphans should be given. In the name of THE CHRIST we appeal to you not only in behalf of the forty children that we have had under our care in 1919, but in behalf of at least fifty more.

The number of those to whom we have denied entrance has mounted to SEVENTY-SIX. After Emmanuel cottage, Zion Classis cottage, Maryland Classis schoolhouse, the central heating plant and sewage disposal plant are completed we will have about ninety children to maintain. Our income should, therefore, be proportionately larger.

You and your members, in the congregation and Sunday School will be happier, richer and better by doing big things for the Church's dependent orphan children. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." He whom the angels worshiped and whom the wise adored with gifts says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of

the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Make your Christmas Day a happy occasion by planning to give, then give liberally to the sacred cause of maintaining the Orphans' Home. Your generosity will mean another year's necessary provision. Through you we appeal to every man and woman, to every boy and girl in your congregation and Sunday School. Send us your greetings and love, but send your offerings to Treasurer Rev. Samuel H. Stein, 119 South Duke street, York, Pa.

Wishing you the best Christmas joys, we are

Gratefully yours,

The Board of Directors

Rev. Andrew H. Smith
Superintendent

John L. Gerber
Secretary

PHOEBE DEACONESS AND OLD OLD FOLKS' HOME

Rev. F. H. Moyer, Superintendent

The annual Christmas festival will be held as usual in the parlors of the Old Folks' building at 3 P. M. on Sunday, December 21. An interesting program is being prepared for the occasion. Children from one of the local Churches will recite and furnish a part of the music. A number of adults will also participate in the program. The program is being arranged to entertain and bring Christmas cheer to our aged guests.

This service would not be complete without the offering. The commemoration of the birth of our Saviour would be a failure without a gift to Him. Our offering as usual will be devoted to the support of Bethany Orphans' Home. With our limited resources in this institution the amount may not be so very large in actual cash, but with the gift will go our hearty goodwill to a sister institution.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of the Home will again have a large part in preparing for this occasion. They will spare no labors to decorate the parlors of the Home to the delight of all. The Christmas committee, Mrs. R. M. Kern, chairlady, 531 Chew street, Allentown, is trying to secure the usual turkey for the Christmas dinner, the friends of the institution having never failed in this. Contributions in support of any of these undertakings and gifts of any kind should be sent to the chairlady.

An increasing number of Sunday Schools are observing the "White Christmas." Besides supporting other worthy causes many are giving support to the Phoebe Home. Sometimes the question arises as to the kind of things that will prove most acceptable gifts. We are constantly in need of all kinds of things in the line of groceries and at present we have no sugar. In the line of bedding we need sheets, pillow cases and blankets for single beds. Above all, cash is needed. Our monthly bills run very high with the increased cost of living.

One of the best and whitest gifts to the Home is to join the corporation of the institution. A corporation member pays \$10 at enrollment and \$5 annually after that. Both individuals, classes and Church societies may enroll as such members.

A RECORD OF FIDELITY

The "Messenger" is glad to present, herewith, the picture of Elder Wm. G. Kratzer, of Grace Church, Altoona, Pa., Rev. David Lockart, pastor. Our friend entered Sunday School work as a young man 50 years ago in Christ Church, Al-

toona, under the pastorate of Rev. A. C. Whitmer, D. D., and as a result of the personal work of the late Elder Samuel Sprankle. He gave 31 years of his labors to Christ Sunday School, and 19 years to Grace Sunday School. The latter school honored his anniversary with a special service November 23. All the departments were gathered in the Church auditorium after the study of the lesson. The hour was in charge of D. Earl Hite, superintendent. Elder E. A. Whitehead offered prayer and after a song by the school, Pastor Lockart stated the purpose of the meeting, and gave testimony to the valuable contribution of Mr. Kratzer's life to Sunday School work. At the close of his remarks, he read a personal letter from Hon. John Wanamaker, congratulating Elder Kratzer on his long record. Mr. Kratzer then gave a short address, speaking to the children especially about Sunday



William G. Kratzer

School work. He has seen the Reformed Church grow from a tiny seed to a strong body in Altoona. At the close of his helpful address, his friend, Mr. David F. Ritchey, presented him, on behalf of the school, with a splendid Nelson Teachers' Bible, with his name printed in gold on the cover. Mr. Kratzer is well preserved, walks 31 blocks almost every Sunday to his Church, and remains treasurer of the school, in which office he has served for years. His present state of health would seem to permit him to enjoy his diamond, as well as his golden anniversary, in Sunday School work. We wish him continued joy in the good work.

CENTENNIAL OF DR. HACHE'S NOTABLE PASTORATE

At the meeting of the Pittsburgh Synod early in October, at the suggestion of Rev. Dr. Lady, who is supplying the First Greensburg congregation in the absence of the pastor, Dr. E. S. Bromer, who is on the Forward Movement Commission, it was decided to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the beginning of the long pastorate of Dr. Nicholas P. Hacke in the First Greensburg charge, which began in October, 1819, and continued uninterruptedly until October 1, 1877. Dr. Hacke died after an illness lasting over a year, on August 26, 1878.

A large committee was appointed to arrange for memorial services, of which Dr. Lady was made chairman, and upon which was a representative of each of the six congregations which Dr. Hacke served for

many years. These were the First Greensburg, Harrolds, Brush Creek, Denmark Manor, St. Paul's, near Pleasant Unity, and Emanuel's, north of Export. The pastors of the Second and of the Third Reformed Churches of Greensburg were on the committee also, and the Consistory of the First Reformed Church of Greensburg appointed a committee of three men to co-operate with the committee of Synod.

The committee met and arranged that each of the pastors of the six congregations of which Dr. Hacke had been pastor should preach a sermon in memory of him on the 7th of December, and that special memorial services should be held in the Reformed Churches in Greensburg. In the First Church, Rev. Dr. A. E. Truxall, who sat under Dr. Hacke's preaching until he was 19 years of age, should make a historical and biographical address; in the afternoon there should be a fellowship meeting, at which a number of the pastors of Dr. Hacke's former congregations should speak, and in the evening, a young people's service, at which several addresses were to be made, one by one of the members of the Society on the "Early Life of Dr. Hacke," and one by Dr. Bromer on "Dr. Hacke as a Young Minister," and that Dr. Truxall should deliver his address on the life and labors of Dr. Hacke in the Second Reformed Church of Greensburg at the evening service, and that Dr. Lady should deliver a similar address at the Third Reformed Church in the evening.

This program was carried out in full, with appropriate devotional and musical services, participated in by large audiences. Dr. Truxall, owing to the death of his oldest son in Denver on Tuesday, December 2, could not be present, and Dr. Lady took his place, using the address prepared for the Third Church, and as a chapter in the History of Pittsburgh Synod, on which he is engaged by order of Synod. Dr. Seitz read Dr. Truxall's address, which he had prepared, and which he forwarded when he found he could not be present to his congregation at the ensuing services.

The Fellowship Service in the afternoon was presided over by Elder John E. Kunkle, Esq., the devotional service was led by Rev. Dr. F. C. Seitz, and addresses were made by Rev. E. D. Bright, Rev. Charles L. Noss, S. A. Kline, Esq., Rev. G. N. Wangaman, Rev. A. K. Kline, Irwin Walhoar, W. J. Beamer, and Judge D. J. Snyder, all of whom are either pastors of Dr. Hacke's former congregations or were baptized by Dr. Hacke and grew up under his ministrations, and several of whom were instructed and confirmed by him. Several of the pastors of Dr. Hacke's former congregations, Revs. Charles S. Bushong, Daniel Gress and Dr. S. H. Dietzell, could not be present on account of afternoon services in their charges or long distance and bad roads. The pastors of the other Reformed Churches in the Classis had also been asked by the committee to make Dr. Hacke the subject of their sermons on December 7. Among the anthems sung at the First Church were: "Lift Up Your Heads" and "How Lovely Are the Messengers."

Dr. Hacke was 77 years 11 months and 6 days old when he died. There is a full sketch of his life in the "Mercersburg Review" for October, 1878, prepared by Rev. George B. Russell, D. D., then of Washington, D. C., who was a nephew of Dr. Hacke by marriage.

Miss Sarah L. Hacke, the only surviving child of Dr. Hacke, is having a bronze memorial tablet of her father placed on one of the panels on the front wall of the First Reformed Church in Greensburg to the right of the pulpit. Unveiling ceremonies will be held some time later.

The Question is Simply---

Will You Let It Die or Will You Keep It Alive?

Some of this high-brow stuff that you hear at some of the conventions or read in magazines sounds so very refined, so to speak, that you are almost tempted to believe it true, until—it is put in practice and some day you wake up and find your scholars in your neighboring school where they are still on earth. Don't let them fool you and kill your school. In your own town which are the live schools? Not the ones with music that is dead, but, every time, you will find bright, happy songs make a live, up-to-date school.

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The Church Services

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Prof. Theo. F. Herman, D. D., Lancaster, Pa.

The Lesson for Sunday, December 28, being a Review for the past quarter, there are no notes in this issue of the "Messenger."

A LITTLE STORY FOR THE LESSON (December 28)

By Gertrude Cogan Lyon

"Ye shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1: 8).

The most irrefutable witness for the Lord Jesus Christ among men today is the life of a true Christian. What we may preach, or teach, either by word or pen, amounts to little if our life does not show the power of Christ.

A rajah in India came to the house of a humble missionary and said:—

"I have seen your life, how it is different from mine. You have one family in one house, and they love you all for yourself. They serve you with great affection, while my four wives and my many children only serve me because they fear me. You go out and help sick people. I go away from sick people. The people also love you, and would even make you a ruler over them if they could. This does not make you proud, but you are in your spirit even as one of low caste. Yet you are also as one of high caste, for you are a learned man. Tell me of this power that can make a man so."

And the humble missionary told him of Jesus and the Cross, of Jesus and the Resurrection.

The rajah sent his daughters to the Mission School and himself came again to the missionary's house many times to be further instructed concerning this wonderful Man who was also God, Jesus the Christ. It was the true witness of the missionary's life that had drawn him.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC

By the Rev. Charles E. Schaeffer, D. D.

December 28. How to Make Next Year Better Than This

Ps. 90: 1-17

It is but natural that we should strive to make each year better than the preceding one. This would indicate the course of human progress. We never can afford to stand still. If we do not go forward we shall find ourselves slipping backward. Each day, each year should find us occupying higher ground, reaching loftier levels, possessing wider visions and having greater strength to meet the larger opportunities and obligations. The closing of one year and the opening of another furnishes a suitable time when we may resolve on higher and better things.

If we wish to make the New Year better than the old there are certain fundamental principles which must be observed.

1. A genuine repentance for our sins and shortcomings. There can never be any real progress in the spiritual life without this primary requisite. At the doorway of the higher life stands this imperious mandate—repent! It marked the first word in the ministry of Jesus and of John the Baptist. We must be genuinely dissatisfied with our past achievements and sorry for our mistakes. The greatest obstacle to the development of the spiritual life is an overweening pride in one's ability and attainment. When that spirit steals into the soul there is no more progress. We

take an inventory of the past year. We see wherein we have failed, wherein we have but partly succeeded. We profit by our errors. Experience is our teacher. We observe wherein we could have done better. We recognize the goodness of God, and that leads us to repentance. We therefore enter the New Year with a sense of regret, not that the old year is gone, but that we failed to seize many of its opportunities, or appreciate many of its blessings. We regret our falls and failings, and are sorry that we did not measure up more nearly to the standard that we had set for ourselves and which God had also set for us.

This spirit of repentance should possess not simply the individual, but also the nation and the Church. It is in this three-fold capacity that we enter the New Year—viz., as individuals, as citizens and as members of the Church. The nation has much to repent for. We are not occupying as high a place in the estimation of the world today as we did a year ago. We have strangely and seriously sagged back during the last twelve months.

The Church likewise must repent. She has not vitalized the civilization of the world with the Spirit of her Lord and Master to such a degree that righteousness, justice, joy and peace everywhere prevail. She has not as yet transformed the kingdoms of this world into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Let the Church repent of her errors, weaknesses, shortcomings, sins.

2. Devotions to loftier and nobler purposes. It is impossible to make the New Year better than the old unless we have higher purposes and better resolves. Some folks are very much afraid of New Year resolutions. Sometimes they don't amount to much. Sometimes they are mere scraps of paper. But unless we really and truly resolve in our hearts to make our lives and our conditions better we will not get on very far. Spiritual progress is very largely a matter of the will. It is a matter of choice and of determination. We can, if we will. Where the will power is lacking the soul will be drifting along aimlessly and hopelessly. We must resolve in our hearts that we are going to make the New Year better than the old. The expression of this resolution is an aid, a first step towards its attainment.

3. Definite aims. We must set specific and proper goals for ourselves during the new year. One great trouble with many people is that they have set no standard for themselves. They have no objective for which they strive. It is very important to have a program, a schedule, certain definite ends which are to be achieved. The traveler maps out his course; he figures on reaching certain destinations each day. He bends his energies in that direction. Likewise in spiritual matters we must stake out certain stages which we wish to reach at certain seasons; certain services which we contemplate to render; a certain progressive program which we plan to carry out. This again is quite as essential for the Church as it is for the individual. If we stake out our ground for the Church to cover during the New Year we will likely accomplish more than otherwise we would. This is the chief value of the great Forward Movement of our Church, because it places before us a program which it will take fully five years to complete.

4. Renewed consecration. We can make the New Year better for the nation and for the Church only as we ourselves become better. We must enter the New Year as better men and better women if the year shall be an improvement over the old. There is nothing that can take the place of this. No system, no method, no

Educational Column

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program can ever take the place of pure personal consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ. We depend too much upon all sorts of schemes, machinery, etc., and forget that faith and loyalty to Jesus Christ alone can lift the soul and the world to those higher altitudes which God wants us to occupy.

Book Reviews

(All these books can be ordered from Publication Board, Fifteenth and Race streets, Philadelphia.)

The War and Religion: A preliminary Bibliography of material, in English, prior to January 1, 1919. Compiled by Marion J. Bradshaw for the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook. Association Press, New York. 136 pages. Price, \$1.50.

It will be remembered that the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook was appointed by the joint action of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and the War Time Commission of the Churches, to consider the state of religion as affected by the War, with special reference to the duty and opportunity of the Churches. The full report of this committee will be submitted later. Meanwhile the Bibliography is issued as a guide to those who desire to study the religious situation or the work of the Church in the light of the War.

It is a revelation of the wealth of material that has already appeared, and when the literature of the past year is added, the amount will be well-nigh overwhelming. We should be grateful for this authoritative assembling of the things worth while.

Democratic Christianity (Some Problems of the Church in the Days Just Ahead). By Francis J. McConnell, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Macmillan Company, New York. 87 pages. Price, 60 cents.

Bishop McConnell, who had a rich experience at the front, has in mind the tasks of today as they confront the Church of Christ. The chapters of this interesting little book are: 1. The God of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity; 2. The Church of the People, by the People, for the People; 3. The Part of the Church in Making the World Safe for Democracy; 4. Preaching to Soldiers.

Especially rewarding is the second chapter, and its discussion of a truly democratic Church is worthy of serious study. Valuable hints are given as to the contribution which the Church must make in hastening real democracy, and it is made clear that it is only a truly democratic Church which can render this service.

In his discussion on "Preaching to Soldiers," Bishop McConnell emphasizes certain habits of mind begotten by the routine of military life, the physical condition of his listeners who are often so jaded that nothing but downright earnestness and genuineness can reach them; the mood of soldiers to take things as they come and ignore the large issues of daily life; and the fatalistic spirit which relies upon the freakishness of luck. The writer says that so far as the individual fate is concerned, the soldier's religion issues in a conviction that it is "all right," no matter what happens. "If God is like Christ, why worry? This is the sum and substance of many a soldier's theology." The soldier's seeming indifference to personal, individual religion, coupled with the rough-

ness of his speech, often deludes Christian workers into the idea that he has no religion at all, when, as a matter of fact, it takes the form of regard for the "cause" in behalf of which he is fighting, and he is open to any interpretation which will help him see the divineness of that cause.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR THE CHURCHES

January 4-11, 1920

The officers of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America have issued, in co-operation with the Inter-church World Movement, the following outline of subjects for the Week of Prayer, with a strong plea that the week be generally observed in this time of crisis.

GENERAL TOPIC—"AN AWAKENED CHURCH"

Sunday, January 4—THE CHURCH, AWAKENED BY HER NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

"The Church is today face to face with the greatest opportunities in her history. The world is fluid. The Church looks into such vistas of service and victory as she has not seen since the morning stars sang together. Countless millions of hands—empty, wounded, bleeding hands—are stretched out to her for help. Millions of voices cry to her from up and down the shores of earth. 'We have lost our way, and the night is dark! We hunger! We thirst! We are naked and cold! O, what is truth? Take us back to our Father! Give us God!'"

Will the Church answer the cry? Will she meet the need? Will she answer up to the hour? **SHE WILL IF SHE PRAYS.** To your knees, O Israel."

Texts Suggested—Isa. 52: 1; Rev. 3: 9; Es. 4: 14; John 4: 35-6; Mark 6: 34, 37; Acts 16: 9-10.

Monday, January 5—THE CHURCH AWAKENED BY SELF-EXAMINATION.

Thanksgiving—That God has made it possible for Christian America to minister to the material, moral and spiritual needs of the world.

Confession—That this hour of supreme opportunity and responsibility finds our leadership as a nation weakened by racial and class hatreds, by industrial strife and selfish indulgence, by blindness and indifference to the manifest leadings of God.

Prayer—That the well-springs of our national life may be cleansed. That there may be awakened among us a new sense of moral responsibility. That our political leaders may rise to heights of Christian statesmanship, especially with respect to temperance and other social needs. That the Church may be purified and empowered for moral and spiritual leadership. That the Church and the Nation may not fail Almighty God in this hour of the world's great need.

Suggested Scripture Readings—Matt. 5: 13-20, 29-30 and 6: 19-24; James 5: 1-9; Isa. 55; Psalms 33.

Tuesday, January 6—THE CHURCH AWAKENED BY A VISION OF THE WORLD'S NEED.

Thanksgiving—That the inexhaustible riches of Jesus Christ are available for the world's need. That nothing is impossible with God.

Confession—That the greatness of the need and the magnitude of the task have awakened fears and fostered doubt. That lack of faith has made impossible greater manifestations of Divine power.

Prayer—That the Church may make new discoveries of the adequacy and faithfulness of Jesus Christ. That missionary zeal may be increased in the Church and that all missionaries and co-workers at

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home and abroad may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. That the needs of men and nations may be met in such spirit and measure as will glorify God and build up His Kingdom. That the Church may be led on from strength to strength and from victory to victory until the Christian conquest of the world is complete and final.

Suggested Scripture Readings—Matt. 25: 31-46; Rev. 7: 9-17; Psalms 107; Psalms 2: 1; John 3: 16-21.

Wednesday, January 7—THE CHURCH AWAKENED BY THE NEW CALL FOR CO-OPERATION.

Thanksgiving—That the stress of need has bound more closely together in Christian service the forces of the Church. That there has been demonstrated the possibility and practicability of united effort for the world's redemption.

Prayer—That the leaders of the Churches may clearly discern the will of God as it relates to Christian unity. That abundant wisdom and grace be granted the leaders of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Inter-church World Movement, and all other agencies which are working for more effective co-operation among the people of God. That Christians everywhere may be dominated by the Spirit of Christ and by an all-conquering desire for the triumph of His Kingdom.

Suggested Scripture Readings—John 17; Phil. 1: 27; Eph. 4: 1-6; Matt. 18: 19-20.

Thursday, January 8—THE CHURCH AWAKENED BY A REVIVAL OF FAMILY RELIGION.

Thanksgiving—That the influences of our Christian homes have so enriched our life, and set before us ideals and examples of devotion that have shaped our characters and made us deeply grateful to those who first taught us to pray.

Prayer—That every safeguard may be thrown around the Christian home. That parents may recognize and faithfully discharge the obligation of priesthood within the family circle. That the reading of the word of God and prayer around the family altar may again become a bulwark in the Church and in the nation. That Christian men and women may be made to realize and discharge the sacred obligation of parenthood. That the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon all homes—especially upon those homes where He is exalted and enthroned.

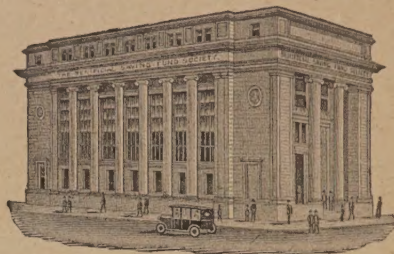
Suggested Scripture Readings—Genesis 18: 17-19; Eph. 6: 4; Deut. 4: 9-10; Deut. 11: 18-21.

Friday, January 9—THE CHURCH AWAKENED BY THE CALL FOR WORKERS.

Thanksgiving—That such marvelous opportunities confront the Church. That increasing numbers are hearing and heeding God's call to sacrificial living and service. That God has given to us in this day of need such outstanding leaders.

Prayer—That an overwhelming vision of the world's need may lead the whole Church to adopt new standards of devotion and service. That the insistent call of Christ may stir the Church to its depths. That there shall be accorded a supreme place to the dedication of life in the service of Christ. That parents may rejoice when God honors them by calling their children for His service. That in schools, colleges and universities the call may be heard with such clearness that thousands will give serious consideration to the choice of their life work, and seek to know the will of God as they make their decision. That those who decide may be wisely counselled and Divinely led as they continue their preparation and turn their faces toward the whitened fields. That the

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whole Church may catch the spirit of unselfish devotion to Jesus Christ and enter upon a new era of triumphant conquest in His name and by His power.

Suggested Scripture Readings—Matt. 9: 35-38; Eph. 4: 11-13; Rom. 1: 1-6; Matt. 28: 18-20.

Sunday, January 11—THE CHURCH AWAKENED BY A REDISCOVERY OF THE REALITY AND POWER OF PRAYER.

Thanksgiving—For the reach and effectiveness of prayer. For the increasing emphasis upon the larger practice of prevailing intercession. For the hundreds of thousands who have pledged to pray daily for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Prayer—That a revival of prayer may sweep through the Church and out over the world. That by intercession and service on the part of His Church, Christ may stand forth in His supremacy and adequacy before all peoples and nations. That in this hour, through prayer, the Church may make new discoveries and new applications of the inexhaustible riches of Christ. That His Kingdom may come and His will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven.

Suggested Scripture Readings—Matt. 11: 22-24; Matt. 5: 5-13; Acts 4: 31-33; Psalms 2: 8; Isa. 62: 6-7; Isa. 59: 16.

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THE FORWARD MOVEMENT

THE REDS IN OHIO

The State of Ohio is being over-run with "reds." They are not seen in the cities, but are mobilized in large numbers in the country sections. This is what a representative of the Publicity Department found on a recent trip into the Buckeye State. But what have the reds to do with the Forward Movement? Nothing just now, but there is a belief that the Ohio farmers intend to draw heavily on these reds when the Reformed Churches of that State line up for the "great advance" next spring. We might have said "drive," but anybody who has ever tried to drive these reds, or any of their kind, will understand why we avoided the word.

They appear to have no propaganda on, and we saw no soap-box performances among them, although we could not escape the suggestion of soap-boxes as we thought of the way their thick hides will some day be shipped over the country after having been converted into the legitimate contents of such containers. This is not incendiary talk. We are simply using free speech and telling facts.

As we passed through the prosperous looking section of the State in which our good friend, Farmer Horace Ankeny, resides, we saw great numbers of these reds herded together near farm buildings and evidently having the protection of the owners of the premises. They were all enjoying ease and not one looked as if he had ever worked a day in his life. They were not of the "root hog or die" type of which we saw specimens recently in the mountains of North Carolina, but heavy set, fat, sleek fellows with characteristic auburn hair (or shall we say bristles), indicating that they were well bred as well as well fed.

The Psalmist's fine phrase of "the cattle on a thousand hills" came to mind, not by way of comparison, but of contrast, for there were no hills and these were not "cattle" except by poetic license, and this, be it understood, is prose. These creatures were hogs—the Psalmist would have said swine—but in dealing with these reds we shall not mince matters. They will get something of that later when they come under the treatment of less gentle hands, for we miss our guess if some American capitalist doesn't make mince meat of part of the mat least, sooner or later.

As we looked upon their fat sides we saw ourselves matching a dollar bill with a thinly cut sliver of about half its size, when some time hence we call for breakfast bacon. And here is where this story connects up with the Forward Movement. That dollar which goes for the bacon makes the connection. When you consider that every one of these reds has two sides and that each will cut into about 500 slivers as they shave them down these H. C. L. days, and then think also of the exquisite hams of which we see alluring pictures in the magazines, the sausage and the scrapple—then you will see how the Ohio farmers of the Reformed Church will use these reds when the Forward Movement comes to amass the means with which to back up its budget.

THE WINTER PROGRAM.

The Field Work Department has mailed to ministers a prospectus of the Winter Program of the Forward Movement with a view to getting before them in outline the activities which the next few months will bring. After the meeting of the Commission on December 19, the complete program will be sent. Meanwhile pastors will see that, as in the Fall Program, the suggestions offered call for no deviation from the normal line of Church work pursued at this season by active congregations. The purpose is rather to put into these endeavors the inspiration which this Church-wide movement brings, and to get back of them with the momentum which the progress of the Movement has thus far developed.

The Department of Spiritual Resources functions prominently, beginning early in January with the observance of the Week of Prayer and using this period for further enrollment in the Fellowship of Intercession. Large emphasis is laid on catechetics and the training of personal workers for an intensive campaign of evangelism. This part of the program augurs a congregational and family religious life that shall be rich in blessing.

At the same time the entire Church is to go to school under the leadership of the Department of Education and Publicity with a view to making all familiar with the great objectives of the Church in these new times. A handbook of fresh and interesting material presented in form suitable for study or careful reading, is in preparation. This book will be about the same size as the book used so widely in the Church in connection with the Fall Program, namely, McConaughy's "Money, the Acid Test." It may be procured at the same price: cloth, 50 cents; paper, 25 cents per copy. Preparations for this work, including the ordering of books, should be made early, with a view to beginning the use of the book about the 1st of February.

The Stewardship Department will continue the promotion of proportionate giving, keeping this matter ever before the people and providing helps for the further development of this phase of our Christian life. Stress will be laid, however, on the Stewardship of Life with a view to bringing the whole matter of special life service before the young. At this point the Departments of Stewardship and Spiritual Resources will strongly supplement each other.

The Field Work Department announces an adequate outline of denominational and congregational effort through its extensive organization throughout the Church for the accomplishment of the several objectives of the program in every congregation.

The program provides for such a complete interaction of the devotional and the practical elements, that the antithesis which has been set up in some minds between the spiritual and the material features of the Movement, should be completely overcome.

If any pastor should fail to receive the copy of the Prospectus which has been sent, he should notify Secretary E. M. Hartman of the Field Work Department at once. It is important that it should

reach every minister in the Church at once.

BRIEFS

Pastors will confer a favor on the Department of Spiritual Resources if they will send promptly to Dr. E. S. Bromer, Secretary, all enrollments in the Fellowship of Intercession which may be in their hands at this time. The united progress of this entire Fellowship is desired, and the Department wishes to communicate with all who are enrolled.

In some quarters there is anxiety among the boys and girls who distribute the "Bulletin" lest the "Bulletin" man has forgotten all about his promise of the Forward Movement button to these young workers. The manufacturers submitted a handsome design some time ago and we have their promise that they can be sent out before Christmas. The "Bulletin" distributors will be the first to wear them.

Dr. Paul S. Leinbach was the "herald" despatched to Buffalo, N. Y., on Sunday, December 7, to speak on the Forward Movement at an evening mass meeting in Emanuel Reformed Church, Rev. V. J. Tingler, pastor. All of the other Reformed Churches of the city closed their Churches on that evening so that their members might attend the union meeting. There was a fine attendance and this meeting set the Movement forward one step farther in the city of Buffalo.

Calls will be issued for special meetings of Classes immediately after the holidays to hear reports from congregations regarding the status of the Forward Movement, to hear reports on the Survey, and to make all necessary arrangements for the further progress of the Movement in every congregation. Reliance will be placed mainly from that time forth on the Classical organization, the Movement becoming more and more a matter of congregational concern.

The Reformed congregations of Dayton, Ohio, all omitted evening services in their own Churches on December 7 and gathered for a mass meeting in the First Church in the interest of the Forward Movement. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Reformed Union. The President, Rev. O. W. Haulman, having gone to Cleveland to speak in the interest of the Forward Movement there, the meeting was presided over by the Secretary, Rev. C. G. Beaver, who was assisted in the service by fellow pastors of the city. An audience that entirely filled the Church listened with deep interest to Dr. Omwake, the "herald" sent by the Field Work Department to deliver the message. He spoke on "Stewardship" at the morning service in the Fourth Church, Rev. H. B. Diefenbach, pastor. A goodly number of the members enrolled in the Fellowship of Stewardship at this service.

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